

Byzantine Communion Spoons: A Review of the Evidence

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Nowadays, a gilded metal spoon is used in a variety of ways for the administration of the Eucharist in all Orthodox traditions save the Armenian.¹ In the Byzantine rite its use is restricted to serving communion to the lesser clergy and laity under both species together via intinction; the consecrated bread is immersed in the consecrated wine, then the sops are served by means of a spoon.² This is not the only nor even the usual way in which the communion spoon is used in the non-Byzantine East.³ Among the pre-Chalcedonians, the Syrian Orthodox clergy use the spoon to communicate from the chalice, and then to serve the laity via intinction.⁴ The Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox use the spoon not for intinction, but to serve the chalice to both the clergy and laity.⁵ The only churches to maintain intact the ancient usage of adult lay communion under both species separately, and in the hand, are the Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches and the East Syrian (Assyrian) Church of the East.

It is by no means clear just *when* and *why* the original tradition of receiving the sacred

¹Many of the corresponding eastern Catholic Churches have abandoned the use of the spoon, but here, as elsewhere, the Orthodox tradition is considered normative in the East.

²N. Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass* (New York, 1982), 93. Intinction for communion should not be confused with seemingly similar elements of the precommunion “manual acts,” such as the commixture, intinction, consignation, and the specifically western usages of the *sancta* and *fermentum*. On these rituals, in addition to *ibid.*, 57–61, see E. S. Drower, *Water into Wine: A Study of Ritual Idiom in the Middle East* (London, 1956), pt. 2 *passim*; J.-M. Hanssens, *Institutiones liturgicae de ritibus orientalibus*, II–III (Rome, 1930, 1932), III, nos. 1387–407. I review the entire dossier on this issue in chapter 8 of my forthcoming book, *The History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, V: The Communion and Final Rites*, to appear in the *OCA* series.

³J.-M. Hanssens, “La cérémonie de la communion eucharistique dans les rites orientaux,” *Gregorianum* 41 (1960), 36–43, 58; *idem*, “De concelebratione missae in ritibus orientalibus. De eius notione et modis, usu praesenti et historia,” *Divinitas* 10 (1966), 493–505. For the non-Byzantine traditions, see especially the detailed descriptions of the communion rituals of clergy and laity in Drower, *Water into Wine*: The Church of the East (Assyrians) gives children communion by intinction (p. 166); the Ethiopians also give infants communion in this way (pp. 194–95); the Copts will sometimes give the laity communion via intinction if there are many communicants (p. 184).

⁴Drower, *Water into Wine*, 147–49.

⁵This Coptic usage dates from at least the beginning of the 15th century: A. ‘Abdallah, ed., *L’Ordinamento liturgico di Gabriele V, 88° patriarca copto, 1409–1427*, *Studia Orientalia Christiana, Aegyptiaca* (Cairo, 1962), 100–101 (commentary), 380–81 (Italian translation of text); cf. E. Renaudot, *Liturgiarum orientalium collectio*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1847²), I, 261, 263.

species separately, in the communicants' hands, was abandoned in favor of distributing both species together via a communion spoon.⁶ Here I shall leave aside the *why*,⁷ and concentrate on the *when*. The whole question remains relatively unstudied, and the directly liturgical sources are not much help. Byzantine liturgical manuscripts are generally silent on rubrics for the communion of the laity—and besides, most witnesses to the Byzantine rubrical tradition as codified in the *diataxeis* were composed after the shift to communion with a spoon via intinction had already taken place.⁸

Fortunately, liturgical books are not our only evidence. The unearthing in Syria in the first decade of our century (1908–10)⁹ of more than one remarkably rich treasure trove of Byzantine church plate and liturgical paraphernalia including, *inter alia*, thirteen silver spoons, has given rise to considerable interest on the part of Byzantine archaeologists, historians, art and literary historians, philologists, epigraphists, and other scholars. Discussed by Marlia Mundell Mango of Oxford at a “table-ronde” on Roman and Byzantine silver, held in Paris, 11–13 October 1983,¹⁰ these artifacts were brought to the attention of a broader public at the 1986 exhibition organized at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and through an accompanying symposium, held 16–18 May 1986, at the Walters and Dumbarton Oaks. Since then, interest has been sustained by the splendid publications resulting from that exhibit: Marlia Mundell Mango's 1986 exhibit catalogue¹¹ and the published symposium papers edited by Mundell Mango and Susan Boyd, Byzantine curator at Dumbarton Oaks.¹²

Surprisingly, however, historians of the liturgy have largely ignored this material and its possible implications for the history of the liturgy. Except for the recent study of Stefan Hauser,¹³ I know of not a single important *liturgical* discussion of Byzantine church spoons in more than sixty years—since the polymath Henri Leclercq's overview in the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (1914) and Joseph Braun's careful review of the historical evidence (1932).¹⁴ This neglect is understandable. Oriental liturgiology

⁶I study the entire question in detail in chapter 13 of Taft, *History*, V. The earliest explicit witness to the older tradition of hand communion is Cyril/John II of Jerusalem (post-380), Catechesis 5, 21–22: Cyrille de Jérusalem, *Catéchèses mystagogiques*, introduction, critical text and notes by A. Piédagnel, trans. J. Paris, SC 126, bis (Paris, 1988), 170–73. One of the last Byzantine witnesses to the original tradition is the Council in Trullo (691/2), canon 101: P.-P. Joannou, *Discipline générale antique (II^e–IX^e s.)*, 2 vols., Fonti codificazione canonica orientale, fasc. 9 (Grottaferrata, 1962–64), I.1:237–39 = Mansi 1:985–88.

⁷I indicate some possible reasons, insofar as they can be ascertained, in my forthcoming book cited above, note 2.

⁸See R. F. Taft, *The Great Entrance: A History of the Transfer of Gifts and Other Preamphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, OCA 200 (1978²), xxxii–viii, 124–26.

⁹M. Mundell Mango, *Silver from Early Byzantium: The Kaper Koraon and Related Treasures*, Walters Art Gallery Publication in the History of Art (Baltimore, 1986), 20–36.

¹⁰M. Mundell Mango, “The Origins of the Syrian Ecclesiastical Silver Treasures of the Sixth-Seventh Centuries,” in *Argenterie romaine et byzantine: Actes de la table-ronde, Paris 11–13 octobre 1983*, ed. F. Baratte (Paris, 1988), 163–84.

¹¹Mundell Mango, *Silver*.

¹²S. A. Boyd and M. Mundell Mango, eds., *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (Washington, D.C., 1993). However, the possible liturgical use of these silver objects was not discussed at the symposium (p. xxi), nor did the work of Stefan Hauser appear early enough to be taken into consideration there (see the following note).

¹³S. R. Hauser, *Spätantike und frühchristliche Silberlöffel: Bemerkungen zur Produktion Luxusgütern im 5. bis 7. Jahrhundert*, JbAC Ergänzungsband 19 (Münster, 1992).

¹⁴H. Leclercq, “Cuiller,” *DACL* 3.2:3172–83; J. Braun, *Das christliche Altargerät in seinem Sein und in seiner Entwicklung* (Munich, 1932).

remains a relatively young scientific field with but few reliable practitioners, and ecclesiastical altarware will continue to have low priority on the list of things to study until issues considered more pressing have been examined. At the present state of our knowledge, the following pages can offer no more than a review of the historical evidence for eastern, especially Byzantine-rite, communion spoons, when they were introduced, and how they seem to have been used.

Latin sources overwhelmingly confirm that beginning in the ninth century, the practice of hand communion in the West—placing the consecrated bread in the communicants' hands, then giving them to drink from the chalice—was restricted to the clergy.¹⁵ For Byzantium, with time and a closer look at the evidence, opinions have gradually moved forward the supposed date of communion via a spoon from the wildly improbable to the more cautious. Some overly imaginative older authors opined that John Chrysostom introduced the communion spoon¹⁶ because of the deceitful Macedonian woman in the miracle story recounted by Sozomen, *Church History*, VIII, 5.4–6.¹⁷ Less improbably, John Meyendorff, with no supporting documentation, though doubtless thinking of the Byzantine silver spoons in archaeological finds, has stated "Soon lay persons were not allowed any more (except for the emperor) to receive the Body of Christ in the hands, and drink from the cup. In Constantinople, since the seventh century communion was given to the laity with a special spoon."¹⁸ More cautiously, Otto Nussbaum affirms that the eastern communion spoon appears toward the end of the eighth century.¹⁹ André Jacob,²⁰ following Braun,²¹ asserts that the Byzantine communion spoon is first men-

¹⁵P.-M. Gy, "Quand et pourquoi la communion dans la bouche a-t-elle remplacé la communion dans la main dans l'Église latine?" in *Gestes et paroles dans les diverses familles liturgiques. Conférences S-Serge, XXIV^e Semaine d'études liturgiques*, Paris, 28 juin–1 juillet 1977, BiblEphL Subsidia 14 (Rome, 1978), 117–21; abundant texts cited in O. Nussbaum, *Die Handkommunion* (Cologne, 1969), 25 ff; M. Auge, "A proposito della comunione sulla mano," *Ecclesia orans* 8 (1991), 302–3; Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy*, 86–92; also J. A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Missarum sollemnia*, 2 vols. (New York, 1951, 1955), II, 381–82. Jungmann associates this change with the shift from leavened to unleavened bread, and cites canon 2 of the Council of Rouen ca. 878, which legislates, "nulli autem laico aut feminae eucharistiam in manibus ponat, sed tantum in os eius" (Mansi 10:1199–1200). Gy, however, relates the restriction of hand communion to the clergy with the transalpine custom of anointing the priests' hands at ordination. Further, Gy says, there were neither councils nor even a bishop in Rouen in this period of the Viking incursions, and the canon of Rouen that Jungmann cites is an invention of Regino of Prüm (d. 915).

¹⁶This is the view of Petrus Arcudius, *De concordia ecclesiae occidentalis et orientalis in septem sacramentorum administratione libri VIII* (Paris, 1672), bk. 2, chap. 53, and of Ligaridius: J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum* . . . (Venice, 1730²; repr. Graz, 1960), 130 n. 179. Ligaridius is Paisios Ligarides (1610–78), alumnus of the Greek College in Rome and later Greek Orthodox metropolitan of Gaza, on whom see H. T. Hionides, *Paisius Ligarides*, Twayne's World Author Series 240 (New York, 1972). C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: Its Origin and Evolution* (Allendale, N.J., 1971), 694 n. 15, adds Nicephorus Callistus as one holding this view too, though Kucharek provides no supporting documentation, and I can find no mention of the spoon in the account of the miracle in Nicephorus Callistus, *Church History* (ca. 1320), XIII, 7, PG 146, cols. 953–956.

¹⁷GCS 50:357–58 = PG 67, cols. 1528–1529; cf. F. van de Pavard, *Zur Geschichte der Meßliturgie in Antiocheia und Konstantinopel gegen Ende des vierten Jahrhunderts: Analyse der Quellen bei Johannes Chrysostomos*, OCA 187 (1970), 532. The same story, with embroidering, is recounted in Nicephorus Callistus, *Church History* (ca. 1320), XIII, 7, PG 146, cols. 953–956.

¹⁸J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church, 450–680 A.D.* (Crestwood, 1989), 74.

¹⁹Nussbaum, *Handkommunion*, 28.

²⁰A. Jacob, "Deux formules d'immixtion syro-palestiniennes et leur utilisation dans le rite byzantin de l'Italie méridionale," *Vetera Christianorum* 13 (1976), 36.

²¹Braun, *Altargerät*, 272.

tioned at the Synod of Constantinople in 861. Earlier, A. Petrovskij tried to argue that the presence of the commixture rite²² in the earliest extant euchology manuscript, the eighth-century Vatican Library codex Barberini gr. 336,²³ necessarily implies the use of the spoon,²⁴ which it certainly does not; the commixture existed long before communion via a spoon.²⁵

In the face of this confusion and the tendency (at least in my judgment) of some to rely on the material evidence uncritically for liturgical conclusions, without taking adequate account of the literary sources, I shall try to do what no one has attempted for decades: re-examine not just the archaeological but also the literary and liturgical evidence as exhaustively as possible. Because *liturgically*, at least, the textual evidence must interpret the archaeological finds, not vice versa—the existence of spoons does not define their liturgical use—and because of the complexity of the archaeological finds, I believe it more useful to summarize the material evidence for church spoons before examining the literary basis for their possible interpretation as liturgical.

A. CHURCH SPOONS: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

I. The Finds

Hundreds of silver spoons from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages have been discovered in the East and West.²⁶ Within the Byzantine Empire, to which our investigation is limited, spoons have been discovered at a wide variety of sites—Canoscio Mytilene, Lampsacus, Cyprus, Ma'arat en Noman, and, most important of all, in the famous “Kaper Koraon Treasure.” Another major trove of Byzantine church silver, the extraordinarily large and opulent Sion Treasure, discovered in southwestern Turkey outside the village of Kumluca, about eight kilometers north of the Lycian coast, contains no spoons.²⁷

Marlia Mundell Mango has assembled and commented on the finds relevant to our study—eastern spoons from church troves—some of which may have been liturgical instruments. I shall refer to them and other objects by the numbers she assigns them in her Walters exhibition catalogue.²⁸ All but one (no. 69) of these spoons are from the four famous northern Syrian silver treasures associated with Hama (Walters Art Gallery), Stuma (Archaeological Museum, Istanbul), Riha (mostly at Dumbarton Oaks), and Anti-

²²The “commixture” or “commingling” consists in the symbolic uniting of the eucharistic Body and Blood by putting a piece of the consecrated bread into the chalice of consecrated wine just before communion.

²³S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, eds., *L'Eucologio Barberini gr. 336* (ff. 1–263), *BiblEphL Subsidia* 80 (Rome, 1995), nos. 19.6, 40.6; F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford, 1896), 341.19–20.

²⁴A. Petrovskij, “Istorija čina pričašćenija v vostočnoj i zapadnoj Cerkvi,” *Khristianskoe čtenie* 209, year 80 (1900), pt. 1:368.

²⁵The commixture is seen ca. 392 in Theodore of Mopsuestia, Hom. 16, 15–20, in R. Tonneau and R. Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste*, ST 145 (Vatican City, 1949), 557–63; A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, Woodbrooke Studies 6 (Cambridge, 1933), 105–7.

²⁶Well illustrated and still useful, if outdated, is Leclercq, “Cuiller.” More recent relevant literature is cited in the following notes.

²⁷S. A. Boyd, “A ‘Metropolitan Treasure’ from a Church in the Provinces: An Introduction to the Study of the Sion Treasure,” in Boyd and Mundell Mango, *Silver Plate*, 5, and the map in fig. A.

²⁸Mundell Mango, *Silver* (as above, note 9).

och (mostly at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, though the spoons are at Dumbarton Oaks).²⁹

I need not (nor am I competent to) enter the lists concerning Mundell Mango's disputed³⁰ hypothesis that all four of these troves actually comprised a single hoard excavated at or near Stuma in January 1908.³¹ That question is without relevance to our argument. Because the Byzantine settlement of Kaper Koraon—Kepar Kurin in Syriac, "the village of kilns," identified as the modern Syrian village of Kurin a few kilometers from Stuma—is named in inscriptions on some of the objects found in the trove, it is conventionally called the "Kaper Koraon Treasure." I shall continue that convention.

II. The Finds Evaluated

1. Are the Spoons Liturgical? Since spoons, obviously, can be used for things other than liturgy, the mere existence of a spoon is no reason to judge it a liturgical instrument. One needs evidence to prove, not to disprove, a liturgical purpose for such a common object, and in most cases, as we shall see, there is no such evidence. So, I take as my point of departure that spoons are to be discounted as liturgical unless there is some substantive reason for considering them so. This is not to presume one can *disprove* a liturgical use; it just means the case is too weak to serve as an argument in support of such a purpose.

The same holds even for spoons found in church troves. All sorts of objects have turned up in such finds, some of them obviously liturgical, some of them possibly so, others obviously not. The archaeological evidence for the existence of spoons among church vessels is considerably earlier than any textual evidence as to how these spoons might have been used; one cannot simply presume that any spoon found in a church trove is a liturgical instrument. Hauser has reviewed the entire history of this discussion, showing that the arguments advanced in favor of considering some of these implements as communion spoons are very thin.³² He points out that the spoons were found in troves along with other tableware. The fact that the spoons were all found in church treasures is irrelevant: not every implement used in church, nor every object donated to a church and stored in its treasury, becomes thereby a *liturgical implement or vessel*. So it is methodologically unsound to posit, on the sole basis of their having been found in church troves, a liturgical use for just the spoons, ignoring all the other utensils and plate bequeathed to churches and found in the same troves.³³

²⁹Ibid., nos. 1–29 (Hama); nos. 31, 33, 36, 39 (Stuma); nos. 30, 32, 35, 37–38 (Riha); nos. 40–56 (Antioch). Regarding the "Antiochene" provenance of the spoons at Dumbarton Oaks (nos. 49–56), which curator Susan Boyd informs me is based on information from the dealer, and which Mundell Mango assigns a question mark, see also *DOCat*, I, no. 13, pp. 17–19: "We have no satisfactory evidence regarding the place where these spoons were found." Here M. C. Ross assigns them to a Constantinopolitan workshop of the late 6th or early 7th century. Ross agrees, however, that the Hama spoons are from Syria.

³⁰See especially the excellent study of A. Effenberger, "Bemerkungen zum 'Kaper-Koraon-Schatz,'" in *Tesserae: Festschrift für Josef Engemann*, *JbAC* Ergänzungsband 18 (Münster, 1991), 241–77; Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 43–48. Hauser (p. 48) prefers two groupings: (1) a Stuma-Riha Treasure and (2) A Kaper Koraon Treasure.

³¹Mundell Mango, *Silver*, x, xiii, 6, 17, 20–21, 33–34; maps of the sites, 21, fig. II.1–2; modern history of the treasures, 20–34; cf. also Mundell Mango, "Origins," esp. 165–67 and the map, fig. 1; Boyd and Mundell Mango, *Silver Plate*, xxv.

³²Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, esp. 78–87.

³³Ibid., 86.

Indeed, apart from patens, chalices, communion spoons, rhipidia, processional crosses, thuribles, and similar explicitly liturgical vessels and paraphernalia, a functional distinction between ordinary silver or gold tableware and the myriad other sorts of silver or gold church plate—platters, dishes, cups, ladles, pitchers, ewers, basins, bowls, boxes, pyxes, vessels for oil and chrism and incense—is impossible to prove unless further evidence from shape, design, decoration, inscription, provenance, or whatever, confirms their church use. I know of no way to tell the difference between an ordinary large secular silver dish and an early Byzantine eucharistic *diskos* unless the object was found in a trove comprising exclusively liturgical vessels, or comes with a matching chalice and/or *asterikos*, or bears an inscription such as “Take, eat” (see section B.V.3 below), depicts the Communion of the Apostles scene (as on the Riha and Stuma patens),³⁴ or speaks to us of its provenance and/or purpose in some other equally direct way.

Furthermore, we have archaeological and documentary evidence that secular silverware and plate, including spoons, were donated in late antiquity to churches in both the East and West—but for their monetary value, not for liturgical use. For the East, the story of Sosiana’s silver (see section B.I.1 below) confirms such a donation. In the West too, spoons, along with other property, were willed to churches,³⁵ though spoons were never used there for administering communion. A detailed inventory extant in a ninth-century manuscript of the *Gesta Pontificum Autissiodorensium* (The acts of the bishops of Auxerre) found in the cathedral at Auxerre³⁶ lists, describes, and gives the weight of a huge treasure comprising two silver services (*ministeria*) discovered, it is thought, at the site of one of the pagan shrines where the first churches in the area were built. St. Didier, one of the richest lords in late antique Gaul, donated the treasure to the cathedral of Auxerre in the seventh century. The inventory lists forty-six spoons in separate entries:

[22] Item, 9 spoons weighing 2.5 pounds.³⁷

[23] Item, one spoon without its weight inscribed, weighing 1 pound 9 ounces; in the middle it has a small nielloed wheel, and on the circumference a decorative band.

[46] 12 spoons weighing 3 pounds 2 ounces.

[47] Item, 12 spoons weighing 2 pounds 9 ounces.

[48] Item, 12 spoons weighing 3 pounds. Their handles are inscribed.³⁸

Other western troves also contained spoons: six at Boscoreale, Italy; thirty-nine at Veillon in the Vendée, France;³⁹ several at Mildenhall in Suffolk, England.⁴⁰

³⁴Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 159–70, figs. 34.3–8 and 35.3–6.

³⁵In addition to the examples given below, see *ibid.*, nos. 81–82; Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 85; O. von Hessen, W. Kurze, and C. A. Mastrelli, *Il tesoro di Galognano* (Florence, 1977), 48 ff; C. Johns, “The Silver from the Thetford Treasure,” in Baratte, *Argenterie* (as above, note 10), 51–56.

³⁶J. Adhémar, “Le trésor d’argenterie donné par Saint Didier aux églises d’Auxerre (VII^e siècle),” *RA*, ser. 6, 4 (1934), 44–54, from which the following information is taken. I am indebted to Susan Boyd for this reference.

³⁷The weights are in Roman pounds, as in the original. A Roman pound or libra = 0.718 lbs avoirdupois and contains 12 ounces (*unciae*).

³⁸Adhémar, “Le trésor d’argenterie,” 49, 52: “[22] Item dedit cocleares IX, pesantes libras II et semissem. [23] Item coclearem unam impensalem pensantem libram I et uncias X; habet in medio rotellam nigellatam, et in giro listram. [46] Cocleares XII, pesantes libras III et uncias II. [47] Item, cocleares XII, pesantes libras II et uncias IX. [48] Item cocleares XII, pesantes libras III. Habent caudas scriptas.”

³⁹*Ibid.*, 49 n. 5, citing H. Thédénat, *Les trésors de vaisselle d’argent trouvés en Gaule par H. Thédénat et A. Héron de Villefosse* (Paris, 1885), 47; see the ample list in Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 99–135.

⁴⁰This trove of thirty-four pieces of Roman silver tableware, including spoons, was buried ca. 360 and unearthed by plowing on West Row Farm in Mildenhall in 1942. Cf. K. S. Painter, *The Mildenhall Treasure*

Finally, we simply have no documentary evidence that spoons had any liturgical use in the Christian East at a date as early as these archaeological finds. A rare inventory of liturgical vessels from this period is found in the *Vita et passio* of the martyr St. Pancratius, bishop of Taormina in Sicily, probably from the seventh century, a legendary scenario set in Pontus in the time of St. Peter the apostle.⁴¹ It lists all the necessary church paraphernalia (πόσαν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν κατάστασιν) with which he furnishes Pancratius and Marcian so they can set up a church. The inventory includes:

two Gospel books, two books of Acts composed by the divine apostle Paul, two silver paten-and-chalice (δισκοποτήρια) sets, two crosses made of cedar boards, and two volumes (τόμοι) of the divine picture-stories (ιστορίαι) containing the decoration of the church, i.e., the pictorial story (εἰκονικὴ ιστορία) of the Old and New Testaments . . .⁴²

But there are no spoons.

So without pretending to disprove liturgical use for all discovered spoons, a procedure neither necessary nor possible, I shall concentrate on those that might have been destined for liturgical use, and exclude those too dubious to serve as a basis for argument. The Kaper Koraon Treasure includes, *inter alia*, such church plate and paraphernalia as chalices, patens, ewers, wine strainers, rhipidia, processional crosses, a single ladle, and thirteen spoons.⁴³ Of these, eight spoons from the so-called Antioch Treasure (nos. 49–56) inscribed with names of the apostles—there were doubtless twelve spoons in the original set—and one spoon from the Hama Treasure (no. 22), as well as the spoons discovered in other finds at Canoscio, Mytilene, Lampsacus, and Cyprus, Mundell Mango judges to have been destined for secular use for the very good reason that there is no evidence to judge them otherwise.⁴⁴ This leaves five mid-sixth- to early-seventh-century spoons⁴⁵—nos. 18, 19, 20, and 21 from the Hama Treasure and possibly no. 69 from the Ma'aret en Norman Treasure found twenty kilometers south of Stuma—that may, according to Mundell Mango, have been destined for liturgical use.⁴⁶ They all have a cross inscribed inside the bowl of the spoon, which, were they communion spoons, is of course the part that would have been dipped into the consecrated wine.⁴⁷ Although crosses were an exceedingly common Christian decoration even on secular objects,⁴⁸ a cross on the bowl of a spoon is said to be unusual.⁴⁹ In addition, spoons no. 18 and 19 also have donors' dedications: + Ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς Ἡλιωδόρου (+In fulfillment of a vow of

(London, 1977). For illustrations of three Mildenhall spoons in the British Museum with alpha/Chi-Rho/omega inscribed on the inside of the bowl, see *DPAC* 3:165, fig. 53.

⁴¹ *BHG* 1410.

⁴² Translation slightly modified from C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453*, Sources and Documents in the History of Art Series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 137, who has it (cf. p. 265) from excerpts published by A. N. Veselovskij, *Sbornik Otdelenija russkago jazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoj Akademij Nauk* 40.2 (1886), 73 ff.

⁴³ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, nos. 18–22 (Hama), nos. 49–56 (Antioch [?]), at Dumbarton Oaks.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴⁵ For the dating, see most recently Effenberger, "Bemerkungen," 266–73.

⁴⁶ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 120; eadem, "The Uses of Liturgical Silver in the 4th–7th Centuries," in *Church and People in Byzantium*, ed. Rosemary Morris (Birmingham, n.d.), 248.

⁴⁷ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, nos. 18–21, 69; eadem, "The Uses of Liturgical Silver," 248 and fig. 39. See also the inscriptions on the Mildenhall spoons, above, note 40.

⁴⁸ J. Engemann, "Anmerkungen zu spätantiken Geräten des Alltagslebens mit christlichen Bilden, Symbolen und Inschriften (mit 12 Abbildungen im Text und 11 Tafeln)," *JbAC* 15 (1972), 165–72.

⁴⁹ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 120, 126–27.

Heliodoros) (no. 18) and Ἰωάννου Θωμᾶ + τῶν Θεοφίλου—([Gift] of John [and] Thomas + the [sons] of Theophilos) (no. 19).⁵⁰ Significantly, the donors of these two Hama spoons also gave chalices to the church of St. Sergius. Around A.D. 550, Heliodoros donated spoon no. 18 and chalice no. 27; in the years A.D. 602 to 610, John and Thomas, sons of Theophilos, gave spoon no. 19, and, together with their brother Mannos, chalice no. 2.⁵¹ Though all of this proves nothing, a liturgical use of the spoons cannot be excluded.⁵²

2. *Are They Communion Spoons?* Even if some of these spoons were for church use, that does not mean they were used in the Eucharist. It has been suggested (and just as vigorously challenged) that they could also have been used for “paraliturgical” rites, such as the agape meal or the *refrigerium*, a funeral repast in honor of the dead; note how many of the spoons were discovered in graves.⁵³ One late (A.D. 1396) inventory of the treasury of Hagia Sophia lists “the *myron* spoon” (see section B.V.8 below). Furthermore, even if the spoons were eucharistic, one cannot presume they were communion spoons for administering the sacrament. From the strainers and other utensils found in church treasuries or listed in church inventories (see section B.V below), it would seem that the sacramental wine was not always of high quality, and the spoons could have been used to remove impurities from the chalice or to stir the wine and water,⁵⁴ either when the chalice was mixed before the beginning of the liturgy or at the infusion of the *zeon* just before communion in Byzantine usage.⁵⁵ Besides, the spatular shape of these late antique spoons, with their long, straight handle and broad, shallow bowl,⁵⁶ would make it almost impossible to use them as an implement to take or administer the sacramental wine from the chalice without spilling it. This would be true even using a chalice with the very large cup (anywhere from 12.5 to 20.9 cm in diameter at the brim) common in late antique and medieval Byzantine chalices.⁵⁷ This, I am told, has been verified by experiment.

3. *Are They Byzantine-Rite Liturgical Spoons?* A few other caveats are also in order before we examine more closely the liturgical issues involved. To what ecclesiastical tradition do these objects pertain? There is nothing to suggest whether the church of St. Sergius, which Mundell Mango believes had received fifty-six of the extant silver objects between A.D. 540 and 560, was Chalcedonian or Monophysite,⁵⁸ though in this period, when the liturgical uses of both Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians in the area were

⁵⁰ Ibid., 118–19, 121–22.

⁵¹ Ibid., 120; Mundell Mango, “Origins,” 167–69, 172–75; Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 49. On the question of donor inscriptions, see the excellent discussion of I. Ševčenko, “The Sion Treasure: The Evidence of the Inscriptions,” in Boyd and Mundell Mango, *Silver Plate* (as above, note 12), 39–56.

⁵² Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 87: “Ihre Nutzung entgegen den durch die Texte bezeugten damaligen Regeln kann jedoch im Gegensatz zu den anderen Löffeln nicht ausgeschlossen werden.”

⁵³ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 254, citing von Hessen, Kurze, and Mastrelli, *Il tesoro di Galognano*, 56 ff, regarding spoon no. 82 (Gallunianu Treasure); V. Milojević, *Zu den spätkaiserzeitlichen und merowingischen Silberlöffeln*, offprint from *BerRGKo* 49 (1968), with a new preface by the author (Berlin, 1970), 113 ff, 128–29; Engemann, “Anmerkungen,” 165–72; Hauser, *Silberlöffel*, 79–86.

⁵⁴ This possibility is suggested in Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 120; eadem, “Uses of Liturgical Silver,” 248.

⁵⁵ *Zeon* refers to the exclusively Byzantine ritual of adding boiling water to the consecrated chalice just before communion: see R. F. Taft, “Water into Wine. The Twice-Mixed Chalice in the Byzantine Eucharist,” *Le Muséon* 100 (1987), 323–42.

⁵⁶ Illustrations in Mundell Mango, *Silver*.

⁵⁷ Fourteen examples illustrated and studied in *ibid.*, nos. 1–3, 27–30, 41, 57–59, 61–62, 73; cf. also Mundell Mango, “Origins,” pls. I.2, III.1–4, VI.1–2

⁵⁸ Mundell Mango, *Silver*, 6–7.

the same, that would have had no readily identifiable consequences for the liturgical use of the vessels anyway.⁵⁹

What is revelant, however, is that although these objects may be deemed “Byzantine” by art history criteria, because they were found within the confines of the Byzantine Empire, by the criteria of liturgiology they can in no way be considered “Byzantine-rite” liturgical vessels if they were found within a patriarchate other than that of Constantinople in the period before the liturgical byzantinization of the other patriarchates of the Orthodox world.⁶⁰ The region where the Syrian church plate was found was an affluent one, enjoying close contacts with the capital. John III Scholasticus, patriarch of Constantinople from 565 to 577, was born at nearby Sarmin. But none of that makes the neighborhood “Byzantine” in the liturgical sense of the term.

III. Conclusion

What, then, is one to make of these silver spoons dating from the sixth and seventh centuries? The archaeological evidence alone provides no adequate basis to resolve the problem. Were that the only data available, one would have to agree that a few of the spoons might safely be considered liturgical. Two of them (nos. 18–19) have inscribed dedications showing not only that they were donated to a church, but explicitly made for a church. That might well denote some specific ecclesiastical use. Additionally, they were donated together with chalices, which could suggest that spoons and chalices were somehow used together, thus pointing to these spoons as liturgical utensils. Though the evidence is inconclusive, that is not an unreasonable inference.

What liturgical purpose they might have served is another matter entirely. They could have been used to stir the *myron* (see, again, section B.V.8 below). If eucharistic, they could have been used to stir the wine and water in the chalice, to communicate in the Precious Blood, or to intinct with the Precious Blood the portion of consecrated bread to be reserved for the sick or for the Liturgy of the Presanctified.⁶¹ We have evi-

⁵⁹On the later liturgical byzantinization of the Chalcedonian Orthodox in this area, see R. F. Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History*, American Essays in Liturgy (Collegeville, 1992), 57 and 64 n. 31.

⁶⁰Ibid. The distinction is not an idle one, for it is a source of considerable confusion in liturgical history when one refers, say, to a church building in Syria, Palestine, or Egypt as “Byzantine” before such a denomination would be acceptable from a liturgical perspective. So without any wish to impugn others’ use of terminology to suit their disciplines, in matters liturgical one must restrict the term “Byzantine” to what can properly be said to pertain to the rite of the patriarchate of Constantinople in the earlier period, and, later, to the hagiopolite-Constantinopolitan synthesis that resulted in what we now call the Byzantine rite. On all this, see Taft, *The Byzantine Rite*; idem, “Byzantine Rite,” *ODB* 1:343–44.

⁶¹See Constantine Harmenopolis (d. ca. 1380), *Epitome canonum*, II, 6 (52), PG 150, col. 97; see also the rubrics of the Greek and Slavonic Liturgy of St. Basil in several manuscripts: Sofia Slav 529 (15th century), M. I. Orlov, *Liturgijsja sv. Vasilija Velikago* (St. Petersburg, 1909), 282–83; Athens Ethnike Bibl. 775 (16th century), P. N. Trempelas, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθῆναις κώδικας*, *Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie* 15 (Athens, 1935), 191; Esphigmenou 120 (A.D. 1602), A. A. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgičeskikh rukopisej hranjaščixsja v bibliotekah pravoslavnago vostoka*, I–II (Kiev, 1895, 1901), and III (Petrograd, 1917), here II, 962. The Liturgy of the Presanctified is a lenten communion service at which the sacrament consecrated at a previous Eucharist—hence, “presanctified”—is given in communion. The rubrics for reserving the presanctified Eucharist are found in the Liturgy of St. Basil, because that formulary was (and is) used on Sundays of Lent. Since Presanctified is the lenten weekday Eucharist, the reserve had to be prepared at the preceding Sunday Eucharist—i.e., of St. Basil. From at least the 11th century on, certain Byzantine authors forbid the practice of intincting the host reserved for Presanctified, but this only proves it was being done: see M. Andrieu, *Immixtio et consecratio: La consécration par contact dans les documents liturgiques du moyen âge* (Paris, 1924), chap. 8, 196–215, esp. 201 ff, and the texts cited there.

dence for a Byzantine presanctified service from A.D. 691/2 on, when canon 52 of the “Quinisext” Council in Trullo orders its celebration on weekdays of Lent,⁶² and throughout the euchology tradition from Barberini gr. 336 (fols. 37r–43r),⁶³ in the middle of the eighth century.⁶⁴ But from the massive evidence for the practice of hand communion in all extant sources, eastern and western, from the fourth through the eighth centuries,⁶⁵ it seems well-nigh impossible that as early as the sixth or seventh century spoons were used in the Byzantine rite as they are today to administer to the laity both of the sacramental species together, from the chalice, during the eucharistic liturgy. Whether they were used outside the liturgy to communicate the sick via intinction is, of course, a possibility,⁶⁶ though we have no specifically Byzantine evidence pro or con. So the existence of spoons, even liturgical spoons, among early Byzantine church plate does not necessarily mean they were used in the distribution of communion, nor if they were do we know how. And it certainly does not mean they were used as they are today. How, then, were these spoons employed?

Comparative liturgy is of little help. Hundreds of silver spoons have also been uncovered in the West, some of them almost exactly the same in form and decoration as those considered “liturgical” from eastern finds.⁶⁷ Though some of these western spoons were liturgical, and, indeed, spoons are still used in Europe to mix some drops of water with the wine at the preparation of the chalice, W. H. Freestone rejects their use for communion: “There is no evidence to show that a spoon was ever used in the West for delivery of the sacrament. But a similar instrument was, and in the Latin rite still is, employed in preparing the mingled wine and water, and for the removal of foreign bodies from the chalice.”⁶⁸ Braun is equally categorical: “At no time did the Latin rite ever know communion spoons,”⁶⁹ preferring instead a straw, usually of silver or gold, an instrument which, in turn, was equally unheard of in the East.⁷⁰ A review of the evidence supports Braun and Freestone, despite Miložčić’s more recent efforts to open the door to a possible use of communion spoons in the West.⁷¹ Miložčić adduces western illustrations of the Last Supper depicting spoons on the table. In one instance, an instrument of some sort—it could as easily be a straw—is being dipped in the cup.⁷² Miložčić, himself, is uncertain how to interpret the liturgical use of these spoons,⁷³ and neither he nor anyone else has,

⁶²Joannou, *Discipline*, I.1:189 = Mansi 11:967.

⁶³Parenti and Velkovska, *LEucologio Barberini*, nos. 42–48.

⁶⁴Brightman, *Liturgies*, 345–52.

⁶⁵See above, note 6.

⁶⁶Communion of the sick by intinction was common elsewhere, though not necessarily by means of a spoon. See below, section B.I.2 and notes 78 and 101.

⁶⁷There are numerous examples passim in Hauser, *Silberlöffel*; Miložčić, *Silberlöffel*.

⁶⁸W. H. Freestone, *The Sacrament Reserved: A Survey of the Practice of Reserving the Eucharist, with Special Reference to the Communion of the Sick, during the First Twelve Centuries*, Alcuin Club Collections 21 (London-Milwaukee, 1917), 147–48.

⁶⁹Braun, *Altargerät*, 265: “Der lateinische Ritus hat zu keiner Zeit den eucharistischen Löffel gekannt.” Cf. pp. 265–79 for full discussion of liturgical spoons; illustrations: pl. 143, no. 565.

⁷⁰Ibid., 265: “Das eucharistische Saugröhrchen ist weder heute in den Riten des Ostens in Gebrauch, noch wurde es jemals in ihnen zum Empfang des heiligen Blutes benutzt.” Cf. pp. 245–53 for full details, including the eight different Latin terms for this communion straw; also illustrations on p. 264, nos. 19–20, and in pls. 166–70. See also Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy*, 92.

⁷¹Miložčić, *Silberlöffel*, 112–13, 129–33.

⁷²Ibid., pls. 19.2, 20.2, 21.

⁷³Ibid., 128–33.

to my knowledge, ever brought forward any convincing evidence, material or textual, of spoons being used to receive or administer the sacrament in the West.⁷⁴

So the discovery of spoons in church treasure troves of itself tells us nothing about their liturgical function. From the archaeological evidence, therefore, one must conclude that spoons found in churches are not necessarily church spoons, church spoons are not necessarily liturgical spoons, and liturgical spoons are not necessarily communion spoons. But since “are not necessarily” in all three affirmations might equally well read “could be,” we are back where we started, and must look elsewhere for a hermeneutical basis.

B. COMMUNION SPOONS AND INTINCTION IN THE SYRO-BYZANTINE EAST: THE LITERARY SOURCES

I. The Non-Byzantine Sources

Though allowance must be made for variant local usages, we have seen in section A above that intinction with or without the use of a spoon has become the common way of communicating the faithful (and in some cases also the clergy) in most eastern traditions.⁷⁵ Here I shall limit the historical investigation to the evidence from the patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem, areas of liturgical diffusion germane to the development of the Byzantine rite. Not surprisingly, in the light of the archaeological finds, most of the witnesses before the ninth century are from the Syrian realm.

1. *John of Ephesus* (ca. 507–586). Apparently the earliest text to mention church spoons is, like the Hama spoons themselves, from Syria. John of Ephesus, a Monophysite writer born near Amida (Diyarbakr) who visited Constantinople in the time of Justinian I and gained the favor of Empress Theodora, is the most important early Syriac church historian. In his *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 55, John recounts how the saintly widow Sosiana had her silver recycled and gave it away: “she brought her silver which amounted to many pounds (λίτρα), and it was given up and chalices and patens were made, and many dishes (πίνακα) and spoons (Syriac *tarwādā*: ܬܪܘܐܕܐ). . .”⁷⁶ But this grouping of chalices together with patens, then spoons with dishes—rather than chalices, patens, and spoons as one unit of liturgical plate—hardly supports the conclusion that of these implements, only the chalices, patens, and spoons—but not the dishes—were for use in the Eucharist.

2. *Sophronius of Jerusalem* (ca. 560–638). St. Sophronius, who was born in Damascus, became a monk in Palestine (ca. 619), and patriarch of Jerusalem (634–638),⁷⁷ is—as far as I have been able to determine—the first explicit eastern witness to communion by intinction. Note, however, that here, as in the earliest instances in the West,⁷⁸ it is a case

⁷⁴Cf. Engemann, “Anmerkungen,” 165: “Meines Wissens ist bisher noch kein einziger spätantike Löffel gefunden worden, für den die auf ihm angebrachten Inschriften, Zeichen oder Bilder oder die Fundumstände eindeutige Hinweise auf eine Verwendung bei der Eucharistie oder Taufe lieferten.”

⁷⁵See references above, notes 3–5.

⁷⁶John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, III, ed. E. W. Brooks, PO 19.2 (1926), 195.

⁷⁷Cf. A. Papadakis, “Sophronios,” *ODB* 3:1928.

⁷⁸In addition to the sources cited in note 101 below (except for the Synod of Braga), see numerous further references in P. Browe, “Die Sterbekommunion,” *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 60 (1936), 218–20; Freestone, *The Sacrament Reserved*, 144–53, 165–75; Kucharek, *Liturgy*, 695; Petrovskij, “Istorija čina pričaćenija v vostočnoj i zapadnoj cerkvi,” 364–67; on viaticum, see also I. Habert, *Ἀρχιερατικόν: Liber pontificalis Ecclesiae Graecae* (Paris, 1676), 273–75.

of communion outside the liturgy: communion brought to the sick or to those otherwise impeded from attending the eucharistic service. In miracle 12 of his *Narratio miraculorum SS. Cyri et Iohannis*,⁷⁹ a writing judged to be authentic,⁸⁰ Sophronius describes the miraculous appearance of the martyrs Cyrus and John to the young Julian, a sick follower of the Monophysite bishop Julian of Halicarnassus.⁸¹ The invalid was paralyzed after being poisoned by his paramour, whom he had abandoned along with his dissolute life. When medical remedies proved useless, Julian's parents appealed to the intercession of the two holy martyrs, who heard their prayers and gave the paralytic some relief from his agony. The two saints also appeared to the invalid frequently during the night, exhorting him to abandon his heresy and embrace the Catholic communion. During these visitations, "they also frequently used to bring him the holy chalice filled with the Holy Body of the Lord and the Blood, and invited him to approach, appearing themselves to communicate, and calling upon Julian to communicate with them too."⁸² From the context it seems that the one chalice contained the consecrated bread and wine together—i.e., the bread immersed or intincted in the wine—though there is no mention of the use of a spoon to administer the intincted species.

3. The "Narrationes" of St. Anastasius of Sinai (d. post-700). Another Syro-Palestinian Greek text is our first explicit witness to the use of a communion spoon to administer the sacrament via intinction. The author, St. Anastasius, was a monk of the monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai in the latter part of the seventh century. Though the region of Damascus in the province of Phoenicia Secunda, where the story takes place, was "Byzantine" in one sense of the term, it was not Byzantine liturgically. Damascus was the second see within the patriarchate of Antioch,⁸³ and at that time the Byzantine liturgical rite was still limited to the Constantinopolitan patriarchate. The same was true of Sinai in the eparchy of Pharan in the province of Palestina Tertia under the patriarchate of Jerusalem.⁸⁴ The patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem would not be fully byzantinized liturgically until much later,⁸⁵ so one must consider Anastasius' witness "non-Byzantine," at least in the liturgical sense of the term.

Despite challenges to the authenticity of many of the writings attributed to Anastasius, his *Narrationes utiles animae*, a collection of edifying tales, are judged authentic.⁸⁶ *Narrationes* 43 tells of the encounter of a saintly stylite with a prominent presbyter who had been accused of carnal sins. The stylite, on his pillar twelve Roman miles (17.136 km)

⁷⁹BHG 477–479i.

⁸⁰CPG 7646

⁸¹See R. Draguet, "Julien d'Halicarnasse," *DTC* 8.2:1931–40.

⁸²N. Fernandez Marcos, ed., *Los "Thaumata" de Sofronio: Contribución al estudio de la "incubatio" cristiana*, *Manuales y anejos de emerita* 31 (Madrid, 1975), 266 = PG 87.3, col. 3457c: Πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τὸ ποτήριον ἐβάσταζον ἁγίου σώματος Δεσποτικοῦ πεπληρωμένον καὶ αἵματος, καὶ προσελθεῖν αὐτῷ προετρέποντο, αὐτοῖς τὸ δοκεῖν μεταλαμβάνοντες, καὶ συμμεταλαβεῖν αὐτοῖς τὸν Ἰουλιανὸν προσκαλοῦμενοι.

⁸³G. Fedalto, *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis*, I: *Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus*; II: *Patriarchatus Alexandrinus, Antiochenus, Hierosolymitanus* (Padua, 1988), II, 723–33.

⁸⁴Ibid., II, 1044–45. Since 1575, Sinai has been an autocephalous Orthodox church under the archbishop of Sinai-Raithou, who is also hegumen of St. Catherine monastery. But in the time of Anastasius, Sinai was still under the suffragan see of Pharan within the patriarchate of Jerusalem.

⁸⁵See Taft, *The Byzantine Rite*, 57 and 64 n. 31.

⁸⁶CPG 7758 B9(9).

from Damascus, was visited by a group that included the accused presbyter who, as the ranking clergyman in the party, presided over the Eucharist celebrated for the stylite. Since the text seems to have passed mostly unobserved,⁸⁷ I shall give the relevant passage in both Greek and English:

1. . . . ἐξῆλθε δὲ καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτερος ὁ λοιδορηθεὶς πρὸς τὸν ὁσιώτατον στυλίτην, καὶ ὡς πρεσβύτερος ὢν τῆς μητροπόλεως, ἦν γὰρ καὶ τῶν πρώτων ἐν βαθμῇ, προσήνεγκεν αὐτὸς τὴν ἁγίαν προσφοράν. 2. Καὶ καθὼς ἔστιν ἡ κατάσταση, προσφωνήσαντος τοῦ διακόνου εἰς τὸ κοινωνικὸν 3. καὶ εἰπόντος· οἱ πρεσβύτεροι προσέλθατε, ἐχάλασεν ὁ στυλίτης εἰς τὸ μαλάκιον τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ ποτήριον ὅπερ ἄνω ἐκέκτετο, 4. καὶ ἔστειλαν αὐτῷ εἰς αὐτὸ ἁγίαν μερίδα μετὰ καὶ τοῦ τιμίου αἵματος. 5. Ἐλκύσας οὖν ἄνω τὴν ἁγίαν μετάληψιν, κρατῶν τὸ ἅγιον ποτήριον καὶ τὸ κογχλιάριον, διεκρίνετο μεταλαβεῖν διὰ τὴν λοιδορίαν ἣν ἤκουσε περὶ τοῦ προσενέγκαντος πρεσβυτέρου.⁸⁸

1. . . . The accused presbyter also went out to the most holy stylite, and, as a presbyter of the metropolis and among the first in rank, he offered the holy oblation. 2. And when, according to the rite, the deacon had invoked the communion chant, 3. and said, "Presbyters, approach," the stylite lowered into the basket his holy chalice which he kept above [on his pillar], 4. and he [the presbyter] prepared in it for him the holy particle with the Precious Blood. 5. He [the stylite], holding the chalice and the spoon after having pulled up the Holy Communion, hesitated to receive because of the accusation he had heard against the celebrating presbyter.

From this text one can glean the following information:

1. The liturgy being celebrated was probably that of St. James, in which the deacon invokes the *koinonikon* or communion psalm (2) with the *ekphonesis*: Ἐν εἰρήνῃ Χριστοῦ ψάλλωμεν.⁸⁹ There is no such diaconal introduction to the communion chant in the Liturgy of St. Basil or of St. John Chrysostom.⁹⁰

2. It appears that the stylite was a presbyter, since he lets down his basket for communion at the diaconal invitation to the presbyters to approach and receive (3).

3. Since both the particle of the consecrated bread and the Precious Blood are placed into one and the same chalice (4), it seems the stylite received under both species together, by intinction. Whether this was by then common practice or an exigency of the peculiar situation is not clear from the text, though the latter seems more likely for several reasons: the early date of this witness, the general acceptance of communion via intinction only later, and, in most witnesses, its restriction to communion of the laity.

4. The stylite was going to communicate himself with a spoon (5). Since he seems to have been a presbyter, this may tell us nothing about the communion of the faithful: in Syria a spoon was sometimes used also for the communion of the clergy (see section B.I.6 below).

5. Note that the spoon is called κογχλιάριον, not λάβις, the usual Byzantine term for the communion spoon.

⁸⁷ Except for G. de Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin: Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, text vols. I.1–2, II.1, and albums (Paris, 1928, 1934), I.1:258 n. 2.

⁸⁸ F. Nau, ed., "Le texte grec des récits utiles à l'âme d'Anastase (le Sinaïte)," *OC* 3 (1903), 62.

⁸⁹ B.-Ch. Mercier, ed., *La Liturgie de S. Jacques. Edition critique du texte grec avec traduction latine*, PO 26.2 (Paris, 1946), 232.15.

⁹⁰ Brightman, *Liturgies*, 393.

4. *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysios of Tellmahre* (A.D. 774/5). The *Chronicle of Tellmahre* 7⁹¹ recounts for the year 525/6 the revolting story of how the Chalcedonian bishop Abraham bar Kaili of Amida coerced the Jacobite priest and martyr Cyriacus to communicate in the Chalcedonian Eucharist, which Cyriacus deemed heretical, by forcing the sacred species into his mouth with a spoon, and, when he spit them out, had him put to death:

A priest, by the name of Cyriacus, had been apprehended and forced to receive the Eucharist. . . . And when the bishop gave the order for it and the Eucharist was brought, he ordered the priest to be seized, to fill a spoon [with the eucharistic species], and to put it in his mouth. And since he had closed his mouth, they could not put the spoon in his mouth. And the bishop gave the order to get a whip and put the handle into his mouth and then put the spoon in, so that by preventing his teeth from staying together, they were kept apart. And when they put the handle into his mouth, unable to move his tongue and speak properly he mumbled, swearing, and said: "By the truth of Christ, if you put the host into my mouth I'll spit it in your face!" And thus . . . they put a spoon in beside the handle and jammed it into his mouth. But he blew and expelled the host from his mouth. . . .⁹²

One need not be overly endowed with hermeneutical acumen to beware of interpreting such a bizarre scene as evidence for the liturgical use of communion spoons.

5. *John of Dara* (9th century). The Jacobite author John of Dara was a contemporary of Dionysios of Tellmahre, patriarch from 818 to 845, under whom John became metropolitan of Dara. He died under Dionysios' successor, John III (846–873), and we do not know much more about him than that.⁹³ In his eucharistic treatise *De oblatione*, II, 28, he asks rhetorically:

Why the spoon (*tarwādā*: ܬܪܘܐܕܐ) placed on the table of the mystery [i.e., the Eucharist]? The spoon symbolizes the Holy Spirit by means of which we receive the Body of God the Word. Then, the spoon symbolizes the nature of the holy angels, the first to know the secret and the arcana of God. Again, the spoon symbolizes the hand of God, which took dust and fashioned and made man from it.⁹⁴

Here we have another witness to the communion spoon, a spoon used in the actual reception or distribution of the sacrament. Just how the spoon was used is not all that clear; John refers to them as administering the "Body of God the Word," not the Blood. But this could be synecdoche for both species: a piece of the consecrated bread taken with the spoon, intincted in the chalice, then administered to the communicant.

6. *Bar Hebraeus* (1225–86). Another Jacobite author, Gregory Abu'l-Faraj, alias Bar Hebraeus, born in Melitene in 1225, served as maphrian of Tikrit—a sort of exarch who was the chief hierarch of the Mesopotamian Jacobites, by that time with his see in Mosul⁹⁵—from 1264 until his death in 1286. In his *Chronicon*, II, 46, written in the last

⁹¹I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca* (Rome, 1965²), no. 151.

⁹²*Chronicon anonymum Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, trans. R. Hespel (CSCO 507 = Scriptorum Syri 213) (Louvain, 1989), 25.

⁹³*Le De oblatione de Jean de Dara*, ed. J. Sader (CSCO 308–309 = Scriptorum Syri 132–133) (Louvain, 1970); cf. R. Draguet, introduction to CSCO 309, p. v.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, text 38, version 28.

⁹⁵On the maphrianate of Tikrit, see Fedalto, *Hierarchia*, II, 903–5, and the bibliography cited there. The title "maphrian" first appears in A.D. 1130 and shortly thereafter, in 1152, the see was transferred to Mosul.

years of his life, he recounts a curious encounter, during the maphrianate of Mar Denha (912–932), between the vizier of Baghdad and the Nestorian catholicos Abraham. The vizier, for some unfathomable reason, wanted to know “which Christian peoples use a spoon to administer communion.” Mar Denha provoked him by replying saucily that the vizier knew perfectly well the Nestorians did not.⁹⁶ The vizier was most probably thinking of the Jacobites, though Braun suggests he may well have been referring to the Greeks, who were so numerous in Baghdad at that time that they were agitating to have their own metropolitan.⁹⁷ At any rate, among the other Christian communities in Baghdad, neither the Nestorians nor the Armenians used a communion spoon.⁹⁸ I do not know how old the Jacobite communion spoon is—we saw one above (no. 5 in this section) in the ninth-century *De oblatione* of John of Dara—but, at any rate, by the first half of the tenth century, the use of communion spoons had become widespread enough for a high Muslim official in Baghdad to be curious about it.

Further, in his *Nomocanon*, canon 4.5,⁹⁹ describing Jacobite usage in the maphrianate of Tikrit, Bar Hebraeus says that the priests drink from the chalice themselves, then distribute the consecrated bread to the people, while the deacon gives the people the chalice to drink from. If this is not feasible, the priest can serve both species together, intincting the bread in the chalice like the West Syrians (i.e., the Jacobites outside the maphrianate) do. But the bishop gives communion to the priests and deacons by means of a spoon, as is still the case today.

II. The Literary Evidence for Intinction and Liturgical Spoons in the Byzantine Rite¹⁰⁰

1. *Evagrius Scholasticus* (ca. 536–600). From the polemics it gave rise to, it is obvious that communion by intinction was viewed as revolutionary. Condemnations of intinction opposed attempts to introduce the practice in the West.¹⁰¹ They were not aimed at the Byzantines, who throughout most of the first millennium seem never to have practiced intinction, not even, apparently, for the consecrated gifts reserved for the Liturgy of the Presanctified.¹⁰² Nor did they put the consecrated bread into the chalice before returning

⁹⁶Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, ed. J. B. Abeloos and T. J. Lamy, 3 vols. (Paris-Louvain, 1872–77), III, 240.

⁹⁷Ibid., 236; Braun, *Altargerät*, 273.

⁹⁸Hanssens, “Cérémonial” (as above, note 3), 38–40, 58.

⁹⁹Braun, *Altargerät*, 275, who corrects the translation of J. A. Assemani in A. Mai, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio*, 10 vols. (Rome, 1822–38), X.2:24, on the basis of the original Vatican manuscript as checked for him by F. Zorell. On clergy communion via the spoon in the West Syrian tradition, see Hanssens, “Cérémonial,” 38, 40, 58.

¹⁰⁰Braun, *Altargerät*, 272, is certainly correct in seeing the reference to an angel giving communion to St. Mark the hermit in Egypt via a spoon in the Byzantine *synaxaria* and *menaia* notices as anachronistic, though not for the reasons he adduces: the fact that Palladius, *Historia Lausaica* 20 (PG 34, col. 1065), and Sozomen, *Church History*, VI, 29 (GCS 50:280–281 = PG 67, cols. 1376–1377), do not mention the spoon in recounting Mark’s adventures proves nothing. For the *vita*, see *AASS*, March 5: III = *BHG*, suppl. 45.

¹⁰¹I discuss the question in detail in my forthcoming book mentioned above, note 2. For a sampling of the western sources examined there, see canon 2 of the Council of Braga IV (A.D. 675), Mansi 11:155; canon 28 of the Synod of Clermont (A.D. 1095), Mansi 20:818; Bernold of Constance (ca. 1054–1100), *Micrologus* 19, PL 151, cols. 989–990; Pope Paschal II (1099–1118), Ep. 535, PL 163, col. 442; canon 16 of the Council of London (A.D. 1175), Mansi 22:151.

¹⁰²Andrieu, *Immixtio*, 201 ff, and cf. note 61 above.

the consecrated gifts to the *skeuophylakion* after communion, as would later become the custom.¹⁰³ Evagrius Scholasticus, *Church History*, IV, 36, recounts a miracle that took place after the 6 January feast of Theophany in the time of Patriarch Menas (536–552). As the story goes, a Jewish schoolboy, having consumed the Eucharist, was miraculously saved from incineration when his father, enraged at what the boy had done, threw him into the furnace. Here is how he had happened to receive the sacrament:

According to an old custom . . . whenever there remained more than was needed of the holy particles of the immaculate Body of Christ our God (πολὸν τι χρῆμα τῶν ἁγίων μερίδων τοῦ ἀχράντου σώματος Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἐναπομείνη), pre-adolescent boys from among those frequenting the elementary school were summoned to consume them.¹⁰⁴

Note that only the particles of the consecrated bread are mentioned, doubtless because the wine would have been too much for children to consume. But that must mean the bread and wine were kept separate even after communion.

2. *The Photian Synod of Constantinople (861)*. Regardless of the reliability of these sources, in some cases doubted by Braun,¹⁰⁵ we find unchallengeable confirmation of the liturgical use of spoons in Byzantium twenty years later, in the Photian synod held at Holy Apostles basilica, Constantinople, before Easter of 861. The long and rambling canon 10 imposes penalties on those who profane by secular use any of the altar vessels or cloths, including “the holy chalice, or the *diskos*, or the spoon, or the venerable *endyte* [altar cloth], or the *aer* [great veil that covers the gifts]” (τὸ ἅγιον ποτήριον ἢ τὸν δίσκον ἢ τὴν λαβίδα ἢ τὴν σεβασμίαν ἐνδυτὴν ἢ τὸν λεγόμενον ἀέρα . . .).¹⁰⁶ But again, though this proves that spoons were considered liturgical instruments, it does not tell us how they were employed, and the variety of usages seen in the sources cited above show that we cannot simply infer they were used then as they would come to be used later.

3. *Humbert of the Romans (A.D. 1053)*. By the eleventh century the Byzantines had introduced communion of the laity via intinction, also using a spoon (see section B.III below), as clearly witnessed in their indictment by the Latins for this breach of tradition. During the eleventh-century *azyme* controversy, in which Latins and Greeks opposed each other over the use of leavened (Greek usage) or unleavened (Latin usage) bread in the Eucharist,¹⁰⁷ Humbert of the Romans (ca. 1000–1061), the cardinal of Silva Candida famous for his role in the A.D. 1054 break between Rome and Constantinople under Patriarch Michael I Cerularius (1043–58), attacks the Byzantine innovation in his *Adversus Graecorum calumnias*. The tract is written in the form of a polemical dialogue between “Romanus” (Humbert) and “Constantinopolitanus” (representing Leo of Ochrid, archbishop of Bulgaria). Humbert culled the latter’s views from a letter attacking Latin uses that Leo

¹⁰³ See R. F. Taft, *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 184–86.

¹⁰⁴ J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with Scholia* (London, 1898), 185 = PG 86.2, col. 2769A.

¹⁰⁵ Braun, *Altargerät*, 272–73.

¹⁰⁶ Joannou, *Discipline*, I.2:466–67.

¹⁰⁷ A. Michel, *Humbert und Kerullarios*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1924, 1930); M. H. Smith III, *And Taking Bread . . . Cerularius and the Azyme Controversy of 1054*, *Théologie historique* 47 (Paris, 1978); J. H. Erickson, “Leavened and Unleavened Bread: Some Theological Implications of the Schism of 1054,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 14 (1972), 155–76; C. M. Brand, “Humbert,” *ODB* 2:956.

had sent in 1053 to John, bishop of Trani, on the Adriatic in Apulia, forty-three kilometers from Bari—which explains how Humbert got his hands on it.

Arguing from 1 Corinthians 10:17 in chapter thirty-two of his dialogue, Humbert takes the offensive by attacking Orthodox innovations, instead of attempting a rebuttal of the Orthodox attack on the Latin innovation of using unleavened bread or *azymes* in the Eucharist:

1. Unde et Dominus panem accepisse, benedixisse et fregisse, non autem legitur ante vel postea incidisse. 2. Deinde quod sanctum panem vitae aeternae in calicem intritum cum cochleari sumere consuestis, quid opponitis? Neque enim ipse Dominus panem in calice vini intrivit, et sic apostolis dedit dicens: accipite et cum cochleari comedite: hoc est corpus meum. 3. Sed, sicut sancta Romana Ecclesia usque nunc observat, panem benedixit et fractum singulis particulatim distribuit . . . ¹⁰⁸

1. Hence [we see] that the Lord took bread, blessed, and broke it. We do not read, however, that before or afterwards he cut it with a lance. 2. Then, how do you defend the fact that you are accustomed to receive with a spoon the holy bread of eternal life intincted in the chalice? For the Lord himself did not intinct the bread in the chalice of wine, giving it in that way to the apostles and saying: "Take and eat *with a spoon*, this is my body." 3. But he blessed the bread and distributed a piece broken off to each one individually, just as the holy Roman Church still does . . .

In chapter thirty-three, Humbert goes on to say that unlike the Greeks, the Jerusalem and Latin Churches still observe the ancient uses. For that reason they need no knives and spoons, he says, adding as a parting shot the topos that Judas was the only one to whom the Lord gave intincted bread:

4. Lanceam vero ferream nesciunt . . . 5. cochlear vero cum quo communicent, sicut in Ecclesia Graecorum, minime habent, 6. quia non ita commiscunt ipsam sanctam communionem in calice, sed sola [panis] communionem communicant populum . . . 7. Et tunc demum calice meri et liquidi cruoris potamur: 8. quandoquidem nemini discipulorum nisi Judae proditori intinctum panem a Domino porrectum invenimus, significante quod eum esset traditurus . . . ¹⁰⁹

4. For they do not know the iron lance . . . 5. Nor do they have any spoon at all with which they would communicate, as in the Greek Church, 6. for they do not mix the very holy communion in the chalice like this, but communicate the people with the communion in the bread alone . . . 7. And then we drink from the chalice of the liquid Blood alone, 8. since we find intincted bread offered by the Lord to none of the disciples save Judas the betrayer, to show that he was the one who would betray him . . .

Humbert, witty, sarcastic, at times even offensive (as, indeed, were his Orthodox opponents), makes his points trenchantly. In the passage cited, the substance of his argument is that even the Greeks do in the Eucharist plenty of things that have no warrant in the Scriptures. At the Last Supper, Jesus took, blessed, and broke bread—but nowhere does it say he cut the bread with a lance (1). The Greeks put the consecrated bread into the chalice and then receive both by means of a spoon—but Jesus did not put the

¹⁰⁸ PL 143, col. 951.

¹⁰⁹ PL 143, cols. 951–952.

bread into the chalice and give it to the apostles, saying, “Take and eat *with a spoon*, this is my body” (2). Like the Roman Church still does, he broke the bread and gave a particle of it to each (3). And, like Jesus, the Romans do the same with the chalice, giving it separately to each (7), so they have no need of lance or spoon (4–5). Besides, only Judas received from the Lord by intinction, hardly a strong recommendation for the practice. (8).

Despite his polemical tone, Humbert is well informed, and gives perfectly clear testimony that by the middle of the eleventh century the Byzantines in the Great Church gave communion to the laity the way they do today, with a spoon, by intinction, whereas the Romans, for the moment at least, still remained faithful to the universal ancient tradition of communion under both species separately, the laity receiving first the bread, then drinking from the cup.

How general the new practice was on the periphery of the Byzantine Church—or, for that matter, even in Constantinople—is by no means certain. But as we shall see below in section B.III, from the twelfth century on, even the Byzantine euchology rubrics begin to reflect the new practice of communion via intinction, and by the thirteenth century it seems to have taken hold throughout the Byzantine-rite liturgical realm.¹¹⁰

4. *The Miracles of St. George (11th century)*. Another reliable text to confirm explicitly the use of the ἄγια (or ἱερὰ) λαβίς or communion spoon in administering the sacrament to the laity in the Byzantine rite is the famous “Vision of the Saracen” in the *Miracula S. Georgii*:

And as the end of the Divine Liturgy drew near, some of the Christians wanted to receive the divine mysteries. And when the priest said, “With the fear of God and with faith, approach,” and all the Christians bowed their heads reverently and some of them approached to receive the divine mysteries, still again, three times, the Saracen saw the priest give the Body and Blood of the Child to the communicants *with the spoon* (μετὰ τῆς λαβίδος).¹¹¹

There are several problems, however, in the date and provenance of this particular passage of the *Miracula* regardless of the rest of the text:

1. Even if one could rely on the attribution of this source to St. Gregory the Decapolite (ante-797–ca. 841/2),¹¹² i.e., from Eirenopolis in Isaurian Decapolis, that would not make the text a witness to the “Byzantine” liturgy in the liturgical sense of the term. Eirenopolis was a suffragan see of the metropolitanate of Seleucia in Isauria, a province on the southeastern coast of Asia Minor directly north of Cyprus. This metropolitan province was under the patriarchate of Antioch until Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717–741) annexed it to Constantinople.¹¹³ How long it took to byzantinize its rite is moot, though in the normal order of events such things do not happen instantaneously. I presume it would have been accomplished by the turn of the eleventh-twelfth century at the latest. Ca. A.D.

¹¹⁰Numerous manuscripts cited in Jacob, “Deux formules,” 36–48, from most areas of the Byzantine rite: the 12–13th-century Sinai gr. 1020, Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie*, II, 145; Patmos 709 (A.D. 1260), *ibid.*, II, 158; Esphigmenou 34 (A.D. 1306), *ibid.*, II, 269; from Calabria or the region of Messina, the 12th-century Barberini gr. 316, fol. 32v; and several later sources from all areas of southern Italy.

¹¹¹J. B. Aufhauser, ed., *Miracula s. Georgii*, Teubner (Leipzig, 1913), 69.12–14 = *S. Gregorii Decapolitae sermo historicus* 6, PG 100, col. 1204 (= *BHG* 690); emphasis added.

¹¹²Cf. A. Kazhdan and N. Ševčenko, “Gregory of Dekapolis,” *ODB* 2:880.

¹¹³Fedalto, *Hierarchia*, II, 861, no. 76.1.3; 868–69, no. 76.19.2.

1085–96, the *Protheoria* 10, a liturgical commentary on the Byzantine pontifical Eucharist written by Nicholas of Andida in the province of Pamphylia Secunda and later revised by Theodore of Andida, provides clear evidence that by then, at least, Asia Minor looked to the Great Church for liturgical leadership.¹¹⁴ The same is confirmed for Crete ca. 1120 by the correspondence of Metropolitan Elias with one of his priests.¹¹⁵ By that late date, however, we do not need these texts to prove the use of communion spoons in the Byzantine rite.

2. Gregory did not stay put in Isauria, so if the Saracen story were in fact authentic, the geographical argument might be irrelevant, which brings us back to where we started.

3. The *Miracula*, a collection for which we have evidence from the eleventh century, includes the account of the Saracen's conversion only in manuscripts from the fourteenth century on,¹¹⁶ by which time the Isaurian liturgy, if that is what is being described in the passage, was certainly "Byzantine." The communion call it reports, "With fear of God and with faith, approach," was in use in the hagiopolite and Constantinopolitan rites, but never in liturgies under the aegis of Antioch. This, too, leaves us pretty much where we began. The relevant passage of the Saracen story, including its communion spoon, is a secure witness to Byzantine-rite liturgical usage—but when? Certainly not in the ninth century, probably by the eleventh, certainly by the fourteenth. But by the eleventh century the question is already long resolved.

4. Any attempt to date this source on the basis of the communion call it cites would be a *petitio principii*, arguing from the unknown to the unknown.¹¹⁷

With so many caveats to juggle, I would not hazard using this source to date the entry of the communion spoon into the Byzantine liturgy.

5. *Patriarch Michael II Kourkouas (1143–46)*. In the first half of the twelfth century, communion via a spoon was apparently still viewed as an innovation in need of defense, if one can trust the letter attributed to Patriarch Michael II Kourkouas.¹¹⁸ Writing to a monk who, as is their wont, apparently had serious reservations about liturgical innova-

¹¹⁴PG 140, col. 429c; cf. R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VII^e au XV^e siècle*, AOC 9 (Paris, 1966), 199–200. On the *Protheoria* and its authors, see *ibid.*, 181–206. Bornert (pp. 181–96) dates the commentary between 1055 and 1063. This has been challenged by J. Darrouzès, "Nicolas d'Andida et les azymes," *REB* 32 (1974), 199–203, who argues for 1085–95. On the spread of the Byzantine rite throughout the Orthodox world during the Middle Ages, see Taft, *The Byzantine Rite*, 56–57, and the references there on p. 64 n. 31.

¹¹⁵V. Laurent, "Le rituel de la proskomidie et le métropolite de Crète Élie," *REB* 16 (1958), 126–42 *passim*.

¹¹⁶Manuscripts listed in J. B. Aufhauser, *Das Drachenwunder des Heiligen Georg in der griechischen und lateinischen Überlieferung*, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 5 (Leipzig, 1911), 7–8, 20–22; cf. H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1959), 578–79.

¹¹⁷I study this question in chapter 14 of my forthcoming book cited above, note 2.

¹¹⁸Some prefer to attribute this letter to the Byzantine theologian John Phournes, protos of a monastery on Mt. Ganos in the second decade of the 12th century, but a difference of a couple of decades in dating the document does not affect our argument: cf. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, 616; *Regestes* 1022 = V. Grumel, *Les registres du patriarcat de Constantinople*, I: *Les actes des patriarches*, fasc. 1–3, Le patriarcat byzantin, ser. 1 (Kadiköy-Istanbul, 1932, 1936; Bucharest, 1947), and V. Laurent, fasc. 4 (Paris, 1971); fasc. 1, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1972); L. Allatius, *De Ecclesiae occidentalis et orientalis perpetua consensione* (Cologne, 1648), 1153–60 = bk. 3, chap. 13, no. 15; cf. S. Salaville, "Une explication du patriarche Michel l'Oxite (1143–1146) sur la formule de consécration eucharistique," *EO* 16 (1913), 289–91. This text is exploited on the epiclesis question also by M. Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica Christianorum orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissentium*, III (Paris, 1930), 279–81.

tions, the patriarch explains, with astonishing liberal-mindedness for that period, that only with regard to the substance of faith in the Holy Trinity and in the one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His economy of salvation—i.e., with regard to things dogmatic—has there been no change in the Church. In other matters, the Church has systematically changed things for the better. Among the several liturgical changes the patriarch belabors is the fact that formerly “not only those in the sanctuary, as now, but everyone else received the heavenly bread in the hands, covering it with kisses and touching the eyes with it, then eating it,” whereas now the Church more fittingly “communicates everyone in the life-giving food by a spoon (λαβίδι) or from the hand of the bishop, except for the clergy . . .”¹¹⁹

How is one to interpret the phrase “or from the hand of the bishop”? Does this mean that the bishop continued to administer the sacrament in the old way, without using a spoon? That is certainly not to be excluded, considering the more conservative, archaizing character of the pontifical rite.¹²⁰

6. *Theodore Balsamon* (ca. 1130/40–d. post-1195). Byzantine canonist Theodore Balsamon of Constantinople, commenting on canon 101 of the “Quinisext” Council in Trullo (A.D. 691/2),¹²¹ remarks that despite the council, “in some churches” (ἐν τίσιν ἐκκλησίαις) they have abandoned the old custom of giving communion to the faithful in the hand, which the Trullan canon ordered continued (μεταδίδοται τοῖς λαϊκοῖς τὸ ἅγιον σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγγχειρίζεται τούτοις κατὰ τὴν τοῦ κανόνος περίληψιν).¹²² As Braun infers, if only *some churches* no longer observed it, then apparently not all had abandoned the old usage even in Balsamon’s time.¹²³

7. *An Anonymous Nestorian Tract* (12th century). An anonymous Nestorian polemical tract of the twelfth century, the *Liber demonstrationis de vera fide*, makes it a point of accusation against the Melkites—i.e., Byzantines—and Jacobites that they no longer administer the chalice to the faithful separately.¹²⁴

III. The Byzantine Liturgical Sources

In the professedly liturgical sources of the Byzantine rite—euchology texts or their translations and liturgical commentaries—communion via intinction first appears in the course of the eleventh century, though the use of the spoon is attested only from the twelfth.

1. *Codex Sinai Georgian 89* (11th century). Though at least one Greek source from Palestine, Anastasius of Sinai (d. post-700), witnesses to communion via intinction in the seventh century (see section B.I.3 above), we do not see it in Byzantine-rite usage there until

¹¹⁹Michael the Oxite, Περὶ τῆς ὑπαλλαγῆς τῆς μεταλήψεως τῶν ἁγιασμάτων τοῦ Χριστοῦ (= Regestes 1022) in Ἀρχαίον ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἱστορίας, ed. M. I. Gedeon (Constantinople, 1911), I.1:40.4–10: Ἐπεὶ δὲ μὴ μόνον οἱ τοῦ βήματος, ὥσπερ νῦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες ὁμοῦ ταῖς χερσὶ τὸν οὐράνιον ἄρτον δεξόμενοι, χεῖλεσὶ τε περιπτυσσόμενοι καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπιτιθέντες, οὕτω αὐτὸν ἥσθιον, καὶ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ εὐσχημονέστερον ἢ Ἐκκλησία διορθουμένη λαβίδι νῦν ἅπασιν ἢ τῇ χειρὶ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως, ἄνευ καὶ τοῦ κλήρου, τῆς ζωοποιοῦ τροφῆς μεταδίδωσιν . . .

¹²⁰Cf. R. F. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, IV: *The Diptychs*, OCA 238 (1991), 146.

¹²¹Joannou, *Discipline*, I.1:237–39 = Mansi 11:985–88.

¹²²PG 137, col. 865.

¹²³Braun, *Altargerät*, 274.

¹²⁴BO III.1:305, cited in Braun, *Altargerät*, 276.

four centuries later. The earlier Georgian redaction of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom extant in the eleventh-century codex Sinai Georgian 89 is apparently the first liturgical text witnessing explicitly to communion via intinction in a Byzantine liturgy.¹²⁵ Surprisingly, however, it is the celebrating presbyter who gives himself communion in this way, according to the rubric—"And let him intinct one particle with the Blood and place it on the paten and beg the people's forgiveness and communicate with it and say: 'I shall exalt you, O Lord my God,' up to 'unto the age, and from age to age'" (Ps. 144/145).¹²⁶ As Jacob notes, since there is no mention of a spoon, the priest, doubtless, did not put the entire particle into the chalice, but just dipped a portion of it into the Precious Blood.¹²⁷ Though the rubrics of this Georgian version do not prescribe the method of communion for the laity, it is not unlikely that they too received it via intinction.

Since communion of the clergy under both species together, via intinction, is unheard of elsewhere in the Byzantine communion ritual of the clergy, Jacob proposes that this Iberian usage may have been a Syro-Palestinian custom.¹²⁸ There were Georgian monks in the Holy Land in this period, one of whom copied this manuscript in Jerusalem, as a second colophon indicates.¹²⁹ The oriental provenance of this manuscript is also betrayed by numerous "orientalisms" in the liturgical formulary,¹³⁰ like those found in the old Italian recension of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.¹³¹ Furthermore, Palestine is not only the area where we first see the practice of clerical communion by intinction (see section B.I.3 above). It was also the cradle of the West Syrian tradition, where the use of the spoon for clerical communion continues today.

2. *Three Twelfth-Century Reggio-Messina Euchologies.* The communion rubrics of three related twelfth-century Siculo-Calabrian euchology codices—Grottaferrata Γβ II (fol. 20r-v), Vatican gr. 1811 dated A.D. 1147 (fol. 87v), and Oxford Bodleian Auct. E.5.13 (fol. 22v)—testify that the minor clerics and lay servers still received the sacred species of bread and wine separately, even if they no longer received the bread in their hands but had it placed in their mouths by the priest.¹³²

3. *The Later Liturgical Commentaries.* The communion spoon is not found in the long list of liturgical furnishings, vestments, vessels, and other objects enumerated and explained by Patriarch St. Germanus I (715–730), *Historia ecclesiastica*, nor in Anastasius Bibliothecarius' slightly expanded Latin version of the same document from 869–870.¹³³ In fact, none of the liturgical commentaries mention the communion spoon until the

¹²⁵ Jacob, "Deux formules," 36–37.

¹²⁶ A. Jacob, "Une version géorgienne inédite de la Liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome," *Le Muséon* 77 (1964), 115: "Et unam particulam sanguini intingat et super patenam deponat et a populo veniam petat et illa communicet et dicat: Exaltabo te, Domine deus meus usque Ad saeculum et a saeculo in saeculum."

¹²⁷ Jacob, "Deux formules," 37.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Jacob, "Version géorgienne," 68.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 78–85; A. Jacob, "Histoire du formulaire grec de la Liturgie de Saint Jean Chrysostome" (Ph.D. diss., Louvain, 1968), 220–21, 387–91. Cf. Taft, *Great Entrance*, xxxii, 72, 174–75, 345–46.

¹³¹ Jacob, "Histoire du formulaire," 63–196, 207–8, 499 ff; idem, "La tradition manuscrite de la Liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome (VII^e–XII^e siècles)," in *Eucharisties d'Orient et d'Occident*, II, Lex orandi 47 (Paris, 1970), 114 ff, 137–38; Taft, *Great Entrance*, xxxii, 129, 174–75, 254, 273–75, 296, 345–49, 371–72, 406–7.

¹³² For the provenance of these manuscripts, see Jacob, "Histoire du formulaire," 417.

¹³³ N. Borgia, *Il commentario liturgico di S. Germano Patriarca Costantinopolitano e la versione latina di Anastasio Bibliotecario*, Studi liturgici 1 (Grottaferrata, 1912), 10–20.

twelfth-century *Commentarius liturgicus* 5 of Pseudo-Sophronius of Jerusalem¹³⁴ and the *De sacra liturgia*, attributed to Patriarch John IV the Faster (582–595) but actually a synopsis-compilation, not earlier than the fourteenth century, based on the later, interpolated medieval redaction of Germanus' *Historia ecclesiastica*¹³⁵ (which, recall, does not mention the spoon).¹³⁶ The Pseudo-Faster's text, for instance, has "Communicating by means of the spoon images the tongs of Isaiah (τὴν τοῦ Ἡσαίου λαβίδα) by which the coal from heaven was received,"¹³⁷ a theme already found ca. 392 in Theodore of Mopsuestia, Hom. 16, 36–38.¹³⁸ In Byzantium we see it ca. 730 in the Ur-text of Germanus, not however, in reference to a spoon, but as a figure of the hand of the priest who holds the Body of Christ during the Eucharist.¹³⁹

These texts are interesting only in that they assign to the spoon the symbolism of the Seraphic tongs bearing the heavenly coal that purifies Isaiah's lips in Isaiah 6:6–7 (LXX):

Then one of the Seraphs was sent to me, and he had in his hand a coal that he had taken from the altar with the tongs (ὃν τῇ λαβίδι ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου), and he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips, and will take away your iniquities, and will cleanse your sins."

This much earlier symbol for the Eucharist is doubtless at the origins of the name λαβίς (handle, holder, forceps, tongs) for the communion spoon rather than the more common κοχλιάριον (Latin cochlear[is]).¹⁴⁰

Another medieval commentary from no later than the thirteenth century, a poetic adaptation of the *Protheoria*¹⁴¹ (ca. 1085–95) falsely attributed to Michael Psellos,¹⁴² refers to the consecrated bread being placed in the chalice before communion: τὰ δὲ δίσκῳ λειπόμενα, τὸ μὲν προσφέρει τύπον τῶν ἀτελῶν, ὃ τίθεται πάλιν ἐν ποτηρίῳ . . . τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ τέταρτον πέφυκε τοῦ λαοῦ κοινωνία.¹⁴³ Though this text does not mention the use of a spoon for administering communion, the practice it describes of necessity implies it.

4. *The Twelfth–Thirteenth-Century "Diataxeis" and Euchologies.* Among the earliest euchology manuscripts with rubrics that mention explicitly communion with the spoon via intinction are Barberini gr. 316, a twelfth-century manuscript from Calabria or the region of Messina,¹⁴⁴ the twelfth/thirteenth-century Sinai gr. 1020,¹⁴⁵ and Esphigmenou 34

¹³⁴ PG 87.3, col. 3085B; cf. commentary 3, PG 87.3, col. 3084C; Bornert, *Commentaires*, 210–11.

¹³⁵ Bornert, *Commentaires*, 128–42, esp. 135–36.

¹³⁶ PG 98, cols. 383–454.

¹³⁷ *Spicilegium Solesmense*, ed. J. P. Pitra, 4 vols. (Paris, 1852–58; repr. Graz, 1963), IV, 442.

¹³⁸ Tonneau and Devreesse, *Les homélies* (as above, note 25), 591–95; Mingana, *Commentary* (as above, note 25), 118–20.

¹³⁹ Borgia, *Il commentario*, 37; St. Germanus of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, Greek text with translation, introduction and commentary by P. Meyendorff (Crestwood, 1984), 94–97.

¹⁴⁰ Braun, *Altargerät*, 278.

¹⁴¹ Bornert, *Commentaires*, 207–10.

¹⁴² A. Jacob, "Un opuscule didactique otrantais sur la Liturgie eucharistique: l'adaptation en vers, faussement attribuée à Psellos, de la *Protheoria* de Nicolas d'Andida," *RSBN*, n.s., 14–16 (1977–79), 161–78; cf. p. 177 for the date.

¹⁴³ P. Joannou, "Aus den inderierten Schriften des Psellos: das Lehrgedicht zum Meßopfer und der Traktat gegen die Vorbestimmung der Todesstunde," *BZ* 51 (1958), 9, verses 240–244.

¹⁴⁴ Jacob, "Deux formules," 37–38.

¹⁴⁵ Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie*, II, 145.

(A.D. 1306).¹⁴⁶ In the *diataxeis* of the presbyteral liturgy, communion via a spoon is first mentioned in the twelfth-thirteenth century codex Athens Ethnike Bibl. 662, the earliest extant complete presbyteral *diataxis*.¹⁴⁷ Thereafter, rubrics referring to the use of the spoon became standard in *diataxeis* of the presbyteral Eucharist.¹⁴⁸ And, in general, from the twelfth century on, the communion spoon begins to appear commonly in the euchology rubrics and other sources.

5. *The Otrantan Adaptation of Leo Tuscan (13th century)*. One can see this change to intinction reflected in the thirteenth-century Otrantan adaptation of Leo Tuscan's Latin version of the Chrysostom liturgy made between 1173 and 1178 from Constantinopolitan sources.¹⁴⁹ Tuscan's original version had prefaced the communion of the laity with a rubric that simply instructs the last deacon receiving communion to put the chalice back on the altar, cover it, and summon the people to communion:

*Sed qui postremo communicauit diaconus re-
portat super altare calicem et operit et dicit po-
pulo: Accedite.*¹⁵⁰

*But the last deacon to communicate puts the
chalice back on the altar and covers it and says
to the people: "Approach!"*

The Otrantan redaction in codex Karslsruhe Ettenheimmünster 6, from the first half of the thirteenth century, reworks this rubric:

*Et qui postremo communicauit diaconus ponit
restantes portiones a patena in calicem et operit
eas et dicit ad populum: Cum timore dei
accedite.*¹⁵¹

*And the last deacon to communicate puts into
the chalice the remaining particles from the
paten and covers them and says: "With fear of
God, approach!"*

The Otrantan redaction of the Chrysostom liturgy in the same manuscript gives the same gloss in Greek.¹⁵²

6. *John VI Cantacuzenus (1347–54)*. Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus in his *Histories*, I, 41, describing the emperor's communion, notes that, after receiving the holy Body in his hands, "he communicates in the life-giving Blood, not from a spoon, like the ordinary people (οὐ λαβίδι, καθάπερ οἱ πολλοί), but from the chalice itself in the manner of the priests."¹⁵³ Does this mean that the ordinary people still received the gifts separately, first the sacred bread, then the Precious Blood from the chalice via the spoon? Though the text is patient of this interpretation, and the possibility cannot be excluded *a priori*, such

¹⁴⁶Ibid., II, 269.

¹⁴⁷Trempelas, Λειτουργίαι, 13.

¹⁴⁸See the 13th-century *diataxis* manuscript in the private library of Dmitrievskij: Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie*, III, 120–21; also the 13–14th-century Moscow Synod gr. 275 (381), 14–15th-century Vatican gr. 573, 15–16th-century Sabas 305/St. Petersburg 423, all in N. F. Krasnosel'cev, *Materialy dlja istorii činoposledovanija Liturgii sv. Ioanna Zlatoustago* (Kazan, 1889), 28, 92, 113.

¹⁴⁹Jacob, "Deux formules," 38.

¹⁵⁰A. Jacob, "La traduction de la Liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome par Léon Toscan. Édition critique," *OCP* 32 (1966), 160.

¹⁵¹A. Jacob, "La traduction de la Liturgie de S. Basile par Nicolas d'Otrante," *Bibliothèque de l'Institut historique belge de Rome* 38 (1967), 105.

¹⁵²R. Engdahl, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der byzantinischen Liturgie* (Berlin, 1908), 32; cf. Jacob, "Deux formules," 38.

¹⁵³Ioannes Cantacuzenus, *Historiarum libri IV*, ed. L. Schopen, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1878–80), I, 202.

a practice at this late date would contradict other, earlier witnesses to the existence by this time of communion in both species together, via intinction.

7. *Ulrich von Richental at the Council of Constance (1414–18)*. Does the evidence adduced above show that the Byzantines had never used communion spoons except for communicating the laity via intinction? Once again, Joseph Braun, recognized master of liturgical vestments, vessels, and other paraphernalia, is apodictic:

From the time it [the spoon] was introduced into the Greek Rite it was always used for the same purpose and in the same way as it still is, i.e., for the distribution to the lesser clergy and laity—except for the emperor who drank the Sacred Blood from the chalice like the higher clergy—of the particles of consecrated bread placed in the Sacred Blood before communion and thereby soaked with it. It never served for the distribution of the Sacred Blood alone . . . ¹⁵⁴

Braun overstates his case. Ulrich von Richental (d. 1437), in his chronicle of the Council of Constance, describes the Eucharist celebrated there by an Orthodox priest in the entourage of Gregory Tsamblak of Tŭrnovo in Bulgaria. Gregory, who was archbishop of Kiev and head of the council delegation from the Church of Rus', assisted at the service. Ulrich, a Latin, was obviously unfamiliar with the Byzantine ritual, and his account is not always completely accurate, but he describes things as they appeared to him. Among the peculiarities that attracted his attention was the use of a spoon in the communion ritual. After the priest and deacon had received the sacred bread, he continues in his late medieval German:

1. Do nam der ewangelier und halt den kelch und nam der dritt mit dem löffel usser dem kelch und gabs dem priester. Der auß es uß dem löffel. 2. Darnach, do namen sy den win und wasser mit dem löffel uß dem kelch und trunkend das usser dem löffel, da sy den kelch nit uffhübend.¹⁵⁵

1. Then the deacon took and held the chalice and took from the chalice three times with the spoon and gave it to the priest, who ate it from the spoon. 2. After that, with the spoon they took wine and water from the chalice and drank it from the spoon, since they did not lift up the chalice.

We see here the deacon serving the priest communion in the consecrated wine with a spoon (1), followed, I would surmise, by a description of the consummation of the Eucharist after communion, equally with the spoon (2).¹⁵⁶ Apparently they did not—maybe could not conveniently—take the chalice in their hands to drink from it. Ulrich, awed by its size, described it earlier in his account as “ain silbren, vergülten kelch . . . der wol als groß was, als unßer kelch dry” (a silver, gilded chalice . . . which was actually three times as large as our chalice).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Braun, *Altargerät*, 270–71.

¹⁵⁵ M. R. Buck, ed., *Ulrichs von Richental Chronik des Constanzer Konzils, 1414 bis 1818* (Stuttgart, 1882; repr. Hildesheim, 1962), 140.

¹⁵⁶ Here I concur with the interpretation of R. C. Miron, “Als man ain käß versucht: Ulrich von Richental's Beschreibung einer orthodoxen Liturgie auf dem Konzil von Konstanz,” *Orthodoxes Forum* 1 (1987), 69–70, lines 72/74. Apropos of Miron's remark (p. 60) that this source has received little attention in the “Fachliteratur,” he ignores the fact that already in 1975 I had cited it extensively in Taft, *Great Entrance*, 209, cf. 388, and again in “Water into Wine” (above, note 55), 335.

¹⁵⁷ Buck, *Chronik*, 138.

Ulrich furnishes one more argument against leaping from the existence of communion spoons to the conclusion that they were always used only as they are today. For here the spoon is used by the clergy to communicate from the cup. So the possible liturgical uses of spoons are by no means limited to the present Byzantine custom of communion by intinction.

IV. Communion Spoons in Byzantine Iconography

I shall make no attempt to survey all possible Byzantine artistic depictions of communion spoons. We are interested only in their initial appearance and diffusion. But first a word of caution: here, especially, the argument from silence is without validity. Art forms, like literary genres or the copyist's hand, can be archaizing, preserving models that do not mirror actual usage: modern icons continue to depict sainted bishops in episcopal vesture no longer in use. The classic paradigm is the Communion of the Apostles scene, which continued to represent hand communion long after the spoon was in use.¹⁵⁸ This is especially obvious in the apse mosaic of the church of St. Michael the Archangel in Kiev (ca. 1108), where Jesus is depicted twice in the customary way, putting consecrated bread into the apostles' hands and giving them to drink from the cup—while on the altar there lies a communion spoon!¹⁵⁹ So the absence of spoons in communion scenes proves nothing.

But the iconographic sources that do show spoons confirm what we see above in the textual evidence. From the early tenth century we have unmistakable pictorial representations of the employment of a spoon to administer communion to the faithful. In a scene from Pseudo-Sophronius, *Vita S. Mariae Aegyptiae* 33–40,¹⁶⁰ which would become immensely popular in the East and West, St. Zosimas of Palestine is depicted administering communion to the converted prostitute and Judean Desert solitary St. Mary the Egyptian for the last time before she dies. In Byzantine representations of the scene, St. Zosimas is administering the sacrament with a spoon.¹⁶¹ In the earliest instances, frescoes in the rock churches of Cappadocia discovered by renowned Pontifical Oriental Institute professor Guillaume de Jerphanion, S.J., are in the apse of Tokali Kilise New Church

¹⁵⁸Sharon Gerstel has informed me that the 14th-century fresco of this scene in the Mihailo church of the monastery of Lesnovo, between Kratovo and Zletovo in Slavic Macedonia, shows communion being administered to St. Peter with a spoon, and, likewise, in the repainted scene in the apse of Hilandar on Mt. Athos. These are the only examples of the depiction of a communion spoon in Communion of the Apostles frescoes. See S. Gerstel, *Monumental Painting and Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Byzantine Sanctuary* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1994), 151. Though I have been unsuccessful in locating a photograph of this fresco, even in the Princeton Index of Christian Art, it is described by M. N. L. Okunev, "Lesnovo," in *L'art byzantin chez les slaves: Les Balkans*, I.2, *Orient et Byzance* 4 (Paris, 1930), 227: "dans l'abside, se trouve la représentation habituelle de l'Eucharistie . . . sur les deux côtés de l'autel, deux Christ: le Christ de gauche donne la communion avec la cuiller à Pierre, qui s'avance vers lui à la tête de cinq autres apôtres; le Christ de droite met le pain dans la main de l'apôtre Paul, et tient dans sa main gauche une patène plate."

¹⁵⁹I am grateful to John Cotsonis for pointing this out to me in the new edition of V. N. Lazarev, *Istorija vizantijskoj živopisi: Tablici* (Moscow, 1986), pl. 285.

¹⁶⁰PG 87.3, cols. 3720–3725 (= CPG 7675) = BHG 1042.

¹⁶¹J. D. Ștefănescu, *L'illustration des liturgies dans l'art de Byzance et de l'Orient* (Brussels, 1936), 126–27 and pl. LXXXIII.

(ca. A.D. 940/50–963) and in Kılıçlar Kilisesi chapel 31 (ca. A.D. 900).¹⁶² The scene is also depicted in the frescoes of Ylanli Kilise near Ilhara, Cappadocia, from the second half of the eleventh century;¹⁶³ in a miniature in the twelfth-century codex Paris suppl. gr. 1276 (fol. 95r);¹⁶⁴ and is especially popular in Cypriote iconographic programs from the twelfth century on.¹⁶⁵ So the communion spoon is depicted in Cappadocian frescoes from the tenth century, and de Jerphanion argues that under Syrian influence, Cappadocia may have received the communion spoon earlier than Byzantium,¹⁶⁶ where the use of a spoon for communion is unambiguously attested only from the eleventh century (see section B.II.3 above).

However, as Freestone noted long ago, the St. Mary of Egypt scene is an illustration of what he calls “clinical communion”—i.e., viaticum, or the sacrament of the sick outside the liturgy, exceptional instances of communion by intinction long before its use became general.¹⁶⁷ But that objection can not be thrown up against another illustration, this time a miniature in the psalter manuscript Vatican gr. 752 (A.D. 1058/9), which shows St. Silvester administering communion before the altar—hence in ordinary circumstances, during a liturgy—with what seems to be a spoon.¹⁶⁸

V. Inventories of Byzantine Church Plate

Extant inventories of Byzantine church plate confirm the information gleaned from the above sources.¹⁶⁹ One can never be sure that descriptive lists are complete. Spoons,

¹⁶²De Jerphanion, *Églises rupestres*, I.1:256, I.2:313, 325 and n. 3; pl. 59 (4), 85 (4); also A. Wharton Epstein, *Tokali Kilise: Tenth-Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia*, DOS 22 (Washington, D.C., 1986), 68, 83, and fig. 104; cf. pp. 29–32 for the dating of the Tokali Kilise New Church frescoes. I am grateful to Natalia Teteriatnikov, curator of visual resources at Dumbarton Oaks, for initiating me into the mysteries of the Princeton Index of Christian Art, making available to me her own photographs of Tokali Kilise, and assisting in other ways my research into the visual evidence for Byzantine communion spoons.

¹⁶³N. and M. Thierry, *Nouvelles églises rupestres de Cappadoce, région du Hasan Dagi* (Paris, 1963), 91–92 and fig. 21; date from M. Restle, *Die byzantinische Wandmalerei in Kleinasien*, 3 vols. (Recklinghausen, 1967), III, plan LVII.

¹⁶⁴Milojčić, *Silberlöffel*, pl. 19.1; H. Leclercq, “Communion (Rite et antienne de la),” *DACL* 3.2:2438.

¹⁶⁵It is found in frescoes of the 12th century in Asinou, Souskiou, Lagoudera; of the 14th century in Panagia Amasgou at Monagri and St. Demetrianos at Dhali; of the 15th century in Platanistassa; and in several later churches: M. Sacopoulo, *Asinou en 1166 et sa contribution à l'iconographie*, Bibliothèque de Byzantion 2 (Brussels, 1966), 66–68; A. and J. Stylianos, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (Stourbridge, 1964), passim, esp. 56–57, pls. 18–19 (Asinou); for Monagri: S. A. Boyd, “The Church of the Panagia Amasgou, Monagri, Cyprus, and Its Wallpaintings,” with architectural drawings by R. Anderson and appendices by V. Jensen, L. Majewski, and A. Seltman, *DOP* 28 (1974), 323–24 and fig. 56. I am grateful to Susan Boyd for her many helpful corrections to the first draft of this section, and for bringing this iconographic material and its literature to my attention. The scene is also depicted in 16th-century frescoes in the monasteries of Dochiariou, Mt. Athos (Sacopoulo, *Asinou*, 68), and Barlaam, Meteora (Milojčić, *Silberlöffel*, pl. 20.1).

¹⁶⁶De Jerphanion, *Églises rupestres*, I.1:258 n. 2.

¹⁶⁷Freestone, *The Sacrament Reserved*, 146. See also notes 78 and 101, above.

¹⁶⁸I. Kalavrezou, N. Traboulia, and Sh. Sabar, “Critique of the Emperor in Vatican Psalter gr. 752,” *DOP* 47 (1993), 213 (for the date, 197), and pl. 23 (fol. 193v at Ps. 62). I thank Natalia Teteriatnikov for bringing this illustration to my attention. Still later, in 1600, a miniature in the Cretan manuscript Vatican gr. 2137 provides another instance in which a priest is clearly depicted before the Holy Doors of the iconostasis administering communion from the chalice with a long-handled spoon: P. A. Vocotopoulos, “Οἱ Μικρογράφες ἑνός Κρητικοῦ Χειρογράφου τοῦ 1600,” *Δελτ.Χρυσ.Αρχ.Έτ.*, ser. 4, 13 (1985–86), 204, pl. 9. I am grateful to Prof. Vocotopoulos for providing me with an offprint of his study.

¹⁶⁹I owe most of the references in this section to Mango, *Art* (as above, note 42), 37–38; G. Majeska, “Notes on the Skeuophylakion of St. Sophia,” in press in *VizVrem*. I thank Prof. Majeska for providing me with a copy of his paper.

after all, were among the most insignificant of Byzantine church plate kept in the *skeuophylakion* or treasury of a church, so the argument from silence will not work any better here than elsewhere. Thus, we can conclude nothing from the fact that spoons are listed neither in the fanciful list of vessels and objects in the *Narratio de S. Sophia* 23–25, an anonymous, semi-legendary eighth-ninth-century account of the construction of the church,¹⁷⁰ nor in the list of precious objects provided in A.D. 1200 by the Russian pilgrim Anthony of Novgorod, who was more interested in relics and wonders than in anything so banal as spoons.¹⁷¹ The same is true of some other available descriptions of the treasures of the Great Church.¹⁷² But a will or an inventory (βρέβιον, βρέβιον, βρέουιον; Latin *breve*, *breviarium*¹⁷³) is, by intention at least, complete, and those extant, all from the second millennium, give adequate witness to the widespread use of church spoons—though not always for communion—by that time:

1. *The Georgian "Vita" of Saints John and Euthymius (ante-1044).*¹⁷⁴ George III Mtac'-mindeli ("the hagiorite," ca. 1009-d. 1065), eighth hegumen of Iviron (ca. 1044–56), in his *vita* 16–17 of the Iberian hagiorite saints John (d. 1002) and his son Euthymius,¹⁷⁵ the founders and first two hegumens of Iviron,¹⁷⁶ lists donations (16–17) and books (25) given in the late tenth century to the Great Lavra and other monasteries. The vessels donated include "two large silver chalices, and a paten with spoon and asterisk, and a silver case to keep the relics, all decked with gold."¹⁷⁷

2. *The Testament of Eustathius Boilas (April 1059).* The will of Eustathius Boilas, a rich Byzantine rural landowner from Cappadocia with estates in eastern Asia Minor, is the earliest extant detailed inventory of the possessions of a Byzantine provincial magnate.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁰T. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, Teubner, scriptores Graeci (Leipzig, 1901), 99–102; Mango, *Art*, 100–101.

¹⁷¹Kh. M. Loparev, ed., *Kniga palomnik: Skazanie mest svjatykh vo Caregrade Antonija Arkhiepiskopa Novgorodskago v 1200 godu*, PPSb 51 = 17.3 (St. Petersburg, 1899), 2–94; French translation in Mme. B. (= Sofija P.) de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires russes en Orient* (Geneva, 1889), 87–111; and M. Erhard, "Le Livre du Pèlerin d'Antoine de Novgorod," *Romania* 58 (1932), 49–56 (Erhard's translation is not always accurate).

¹⁷²E.g., the "Anonymous Mercati," a late-11th-century Latin translation of a Greek description of Constantinople from some time earlier in the second half of the same century: S. G. Mercati, "Santuari e reliquie Costantinopolitane secondo il codice Ottoboniano latino 169 prima della Conquista latina (1204)," *RendPontificia Acc* 12 (1936), 133–56, reprinted in idem, *Collectanea Byzantina*, ed. A. Acconcia Longo (Bari, 1970), II, 464–89. K. N. Ciggaar, "Une description de Constantinople traduite par un pèlerin anglais," *REB* 34 (1976), 211–67; for the date, 216–24; text, 245–63, here esp. 245–47.

¹⁷³W. Nissen, *Die Diataxis des Michael Attaleiates von 1077: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Klosterwesens im byzantinischen Reiche* (Jena, 1894), 69.

¹⁷⁴On the date of the *vita* see P. Peeters, "Histoires monastiques géorgiennes," *AB* 36–37 (1917–19), 11–12; M. Tarchnišvili and J. Assfalg, *Geschichte der kirchlichen georgischen Literatur*, ST 185 (Vatican City, 1955), 171; G. Garitte, "Le témoignage de Georges l'hagiorite sur l'origine du 'Barlaam' grec," *Le Muséon* 71 (1958), 58.

¹⁷⁵*BHG* 653, 2143.

¹⁷⁶On these holy gentlemen and their works, see Tarchnišvili and Assfalg, *Geschichte der kirchlichen georgischen Literatur*, 126–74; cf. R. F. Taft, "Mt. Athos: A Late Chapter in the History of the Byzantine Rite," *DOP* 42 (1988), 184–86.

¹⁷⁷Latin version: P. Peeters, "Histoires monastiques," 25, no. 16; the original Georgian: *Jveli k'art'uli agiograph'iuli literaturis jeglebi*, ed. I. V. Abuladze et al., II (Tbilisi, 1967); French translation, *Irénikon* 6 (1929), 776–84; 7 (1930), 50–67, 181–96, 448–60.

¹⁷⁸S. Vryonis, Jr., "The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059)," *DOP* 11 (1957), 263–77.

This text, a true mirror of the life of a generous and God-fearing Orthodox member of the landed aristocracy, lists an earlier bequest to the church Boilas had built comprising, *inter alia*, “Sacred vessels: a *diskopoterion*,¹⁷⁹ a strainer, an asterisk, two spoons; another *diskos*, a small censer, both gilded silver.”¹⁸⁰

3. The “*Diataxis*” of Michael Attaleiates (March 1077). The *diataxis* of Byzantine senator, judge, landed proprietor, and historian Michael Attaleiates (1020/30–d. post-1085) is a disparate anthology including autobiographical material and the history of his acquisitions, as well as the *typikon* he wrote for his monastic foundations, the small monastery of Christ the Most Merciful in Constantinople and the Xenodocheion in Rhaidestos, where he had estates.¹⁸¹ To the *diataxis-typikon* is appended a βρέβιον listing the monastery’s possessions,¹⁸² including “a gilded silver *diskopoterion*, with the asterisk, spoon, and strainer.” The text then goes on to describe the decoration and inscriptions on the *diskos* and chalice.¹⁸³ In a further list of objects purchased after the death of the founder we find “another gilded silver *diskopoterion* with a cross in the middle and the inscription, Take, eat; a silver strainer; an asterisk and spoon.”¹⁸⁴

4. The “*Typikon*” of Gregory Pakourianos (December 1083). The *typikon* of Gregory Pakourianos for the monastery of Bačkov in Bulgaria¹⁸⁵ appends to the monastic rule an inventory of the monastery’s modest property. The meager list of church vessels includes but “one silver spoon.”¹⁸⁶

5. The Inventory of the Theotokos Xylourgou Monastery (A.D. 1143). An inventory of the possessions of the Xylourgou monastery lists “the supplication without spoon, asterisk and strainer” (τὴν δέησιν χωρὶς λαβίδος ἀστερίσκου καὶ ἡτμοῦ [= ἡθοῦ]).¹⁸⁷ The phrase is obscure at best—I have no idea what δέησις means in this context unless it is a rare local synonym for a “service” in the modern sense of σερβίτσω. At any rate, it shows that by

¹⁷⁹ Vyronis, *ibid.*, 267, translates δισκοποτήριον as “chalice” on the authority of E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexikon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (From B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100)*, 2 vols. (New York, 1887), I, 387. V. H. Elbern, “Liturgische Geräte,” *RBK* 5:723, gives the same meaning. But the term is also used for a *diskos* and chalice set: “ensemble composé du calice et de la patène,” according to D. Lecco, “Éclaircissements sur la liste des objets liturgiques,” in P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le X^e siècle byzantin*, Le monde byzantin (Paris, 1977), 35. That is what it seems to mean here, and what it certainly means the first time it is used in the next inventory (no. 3).

¹⁸⁰ P. Lemerle, “Le Testament d’Eustathios Boila,” in *idem*, *Cinq études*, 24, lines 122–23; English translation adapted from Vryonis, “The Will,” 267.

¹⁸¹ See P. Gautier, “La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat,” *REB* 39 (1981), 11–16; P. Lemerle, “Le Diataxis de Michel Attaliat (mars 1077),” in *idem*, *Cinq études*, 67–112, on the *brebion*, 88–89; A. Kazhdan, “Michael Attaleiates,” *ODB* 1:229; Nissen, *Diataxis*.

¹⁸² Detailed analysis of the βρέβιον in Nissen, *Diataxis*, 69–122.

¹⁸³ Gautier, “Diataxis,” 91, lines 1209–10.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 127–29, lines 1173–76.

¹⁸⁵ See P. Lemerle, “Le Typikon de Grégoire Pakourianos (décembre 1083),” in *idem*, *Cinq études*, 115–91.

¹⁸⁶ L. Petit, ed., *Le Typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos pour le Monastère de Pétritzos (Bačkov) en Bulgarie*, *VizVrem* suppl. to vol. 11 (St. Petersburg, 1904), 53.

¹⁸⁷ *Akty russkago na Svjatom Afone Monastyryja Sv. Velikomučenika i Celitelja Panteleimona* (Kiev, 1873), 52. On the ἡθμός or wine strainer, see Lecco, “Éclaircissements,” 36, citing Pseudo-Sophronius (12th century), *Commentarius liturgicus* 5, PG 87.3, col. 3985c. Pseudo-Sophronius, the earliest commentator to mention the spoon (*loc. cit.*), says, “The strainer is so that nothing impure falls into the divine cup” (Ἡθμός διὰ τὸ μὴ τι κοινὸν ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς τὸν θεῖον κρατῆρα).

that time the inclusion of such implements in a normal set of church vessels would have been expected. The same document calls ordinary table spoons κοχλιάρια, not λαβίδες.¹⁸⁸

6. The “*Typikon*” of Bishop Leo of Argos and Nauplion (A.D. 1143). In the same year, the *typikon* of Bishop Leo Anzas of Argos and Nauplion¹⁸⁹ for the Most Holy Theotokos monastery he founded in Area also mentions spoons among the vessels.¹⁹⁰

7. The *Inventory of the Treasury and Library of the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist, Patmos* (A.D. 1200). Another monastic inventory, from Patmos at the beginning of the thirteenth century, lists the treasures in neat categories: holy icons; sacred vessels, cloths, and silks; books, etc. In the second category, with the usual vessels, we find five spoons (λαβίδαι) listed.¹⁹¹

8. The *Inventory of the “Skeuophylakion” of the Great Church (October 1396)*. The one extant inventory of the objects kept in the *skeuophylakion* of Hagia Sophia lists icons, relics, processional gospels and crosses, along with the whole panoply of liturgical cloths, vestments, and vessels, including several kinds of spoons: “two spoons, one of ivory, the other of amber; . . . three other silver spoons; and the one of the *myron* (ἡ τοῦ μύρου) and another of gold with silver and gold decoration.”¹⁹² The “spoon of the *myron*” could have been used to stir the complicated *myron* formula as it cooked, or could have been to take some of the holy chrism from its receptacle for use in chrismation (confirmation).¹⁹³ Later, returning, apparently, to the last mentioned spoon, the text adds, “a holy golden spoon with disc inlaid with silver and gold, which is listed above in the place of the holy spoons.”¹⁹⁴ “Holy spoon” probably distinguishes it as a communion spoon. This, together with the mention of the *myron* spoon, shows again that communion by intinction was not the only way in which Byzantine church spoons were employed.

Some other medieval inventories, such as those of the monastery of S. Pietro Spina in Calabria (ca. 1135)¹⁹⁵ or of Theotokos Eleousa (Veljusa) near Strumica in Macedonia (1449),¹⁹⁶ do not list eucharistic vessels.

¹⁸⁸ *Akty*, 58.

¹⁸⁹ Fedalto, *Hierarchia*, I, 488.

¹⁹⁰ MM 5:188; cf. Nissen, *Diataxis*, 71 n. 5.

¹⁹¹ C. Astruc, “L’inventaire dressé en septembre 1200 du Trésor et de la Bibliothèque de Patmos. Édition diplomatique,” *TM* 8 (1981), 21; Ch. Diehl, “Le trésor de la bibliothèque de Patmos au commencement du 13^e siècle d’après des documents inédits,” *BZ* 1 (1892), 513. The preceding section listing the icons is translated in Mango, *Art*, 238–39.

¹⁹² MM 2:566.

¹⁹³ *Myron*, or chrism, consecrated by the patriarch on Holy Thursday, is the principal of the sacramental oils, used in blessing the waters of baptism and in the sacrament of chrismation (confirmation) conferred immediately following baptism.

¹⁹⁴ MM 2:569: ἀγία λαβὶς κρύα μετὰ δέματος ἀργυροδιαχρύσου, ἥτις καὶ ἄνωθεν ἐγράφη ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τῶν ἀγίων λαβίδων. The exact meaning of μετὰ δέματος (with a link/binding) is not clear, but the only link or joint in a late antique spoon is the disc where the handle is connected to the bowl. There are numerous illustrations in Mundell Mango, *Silver*.

¹⁹⁵ B. de Montfaucon, *Palaeographia Graeca* (Paris, 1708), 403–7.

¹⁹⁶ L. Petit, ed., “Le Monastère de Notre-Dame de Pitié en Macédoine,” *IRAIK* 6.1 (1900), 118–24.

CONCLUSION

The above evaluation of all the evidence for the later changes in the Byzantine ritual of the communion of the laity—at least all the evidence known to me, and I have tried to be as exhaustive as possible—leads to the following conclusions:

1. By the seventh century, the ancient tradition of hand communion begins to break down as the practice of intinction spreads for lay communion in some areas of both the East and West. From the ninth century we see evidence of the same process in the Byzantine rite.

2. Although spoons that could have had a liturgical purpose are found in Syria from the sixth century, there is no evidence that early for the use of such spoons in the reception or administration of communion.

3. Liturgical spoons existed long before the evidence tells us how they were used, and evidence from Syria and Palestine shows that initially they may well have been used for something other than today's Byzantine practice of communicating the laity via intinction, the earliest clear Byzantine-rite proof of which does not antedate the beginning of the second millennium. At least one late document, the early-fifteenth-century account of Ulrich von Richental (see section B.III.7 above), does in fact show the spoon being used for the Byzantine clergy's communion from the chalice.

4. The use of a spoon for receiving communion via intinction is first seen in Palestine in the seventh century (see section B.I.3). In this particular case it seems the spoon was used for the communion of the higher clergy; how the laity received we are not told.

5. Byzantine sources mention the liturgical spoon from the second half of the ninth century (see section B.II.2); however it is only with Humbert of the Romans in the middle of the eleventh century that we find unambiguous proof of its use to distribute to the faithful the consecrated bread that had been placed in the chalice and thus intincted with the consecrated wine (see section B.II.3).

6. By the middle of the eleventh century the present practice of communion under both species with the spoon, via intinction, had already become general, but it had not become universal. Other sources show that counter-usages still existed. According to Patriarch Michael II (1143–46), some bishops continued to give communion with the hand (see section B.II.5). Balsamon, too, implies that not all churches had abandoned the old usage of giving the faithful both species separately, and in the hand (see section B.II.6).